FROM THE TOMB

#24

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IT HAPPENED IN THE MORGUE!!

BY PETER NORMANTON

FROM THE TOMB

February 2008 No. 24

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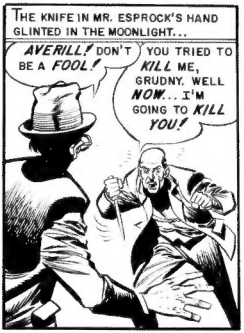
A WORD FROM THE TOMB

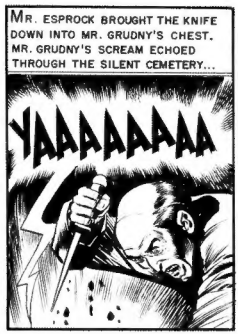
And so it ends the eighth year of From the Tomb. It's hard to believe such an 'orrible rag has survived this far, but against the odds it seems to be getting ever stronger. So thank you to you all for your support, and here's to the next year.

There's just enough room to squeeze in a big thank you to Eric Pigors for this issue's chilling cover, he was under quite a lot pressure when he was asked to terrify us one more time. Cheers Eric. Thanks also to Pete Crowther and Barry Forshaw for their editorial assists, these should help push this bumper sized edition on that little further. Finally another tip of the hat to John Anderson. If you are thinking of setting up your own small press title please get in touch with John at janderson@soaring-penguin.com, he makes it all so much easier. Don't forget our quarter century 80 page Zombie fest due out around May June time.

29.12.07

A CARBUNKLE-DCP SCAN


THE KNIFE IN MR. ESPROCK'S HAND GLINTED IN THE MOONLIGHT...
AVERILL! DON'T BE A FOOL!
YOU TRIED TO KILL ME, GRUDNY. WELL NOW... I'M GOING TO KILL YOU!


MR. ESPROCK BROUGHT THE KNIFE DOWN INTO MR. GRUDNY'S CHEST. MR. GRUDNY'S SCREAM ECHOED THROUGH THE SILENT CEMETERY...
YAAAAAAAA

SUDDENLY THE NIGHT WAS VERY STILL, SAVE FOR AVERILL ESPROCK'S HEAVY BREATHING AS HE STOOD OVER MORT GRUDNY'S GROTESQUELY SPRAWLED BODY. AND THEN...
AAAACHOOO!
WHO'S THERE?
GOLLY!

THIS MAGAZINE IS HAUNTED
IT WAS AN EVENING LIKE ANY OTHER---WHEN CARLOTTA HEARD THE STRANGE, UNEARTHLY, DEMONIACAL LAUGHTER IN THE MUSKY ROOM OF THE NEWLY DEAD! IT WAS THEN--- FOR THE FIRST TIME---THAT SHE DIVINED THE GHASTLY, MACABRE SECRET OF---
THE COFFIN MAKER!
NOTHING IN HEAVEN OR ON EARTH CAN SAVE YOU--CARLOTTA, WHAT YOU HAVE SEEN---NO MORTAL CAN WITNESS, AND LIVE!
THE WEDDING RECEPTION WAS OVER AND THE GUESTS WERE DEPARTING. GUESTS WHO HAD COME OUT OF CURIOSITY, TO WITNESS THE GROTESQUE UNION OF THE WIZENED LITTLE UNDERTAKER TO THE MOST RADIANT OF WOMEN!
IT WAS HIRAM FRANKLIN'S WEALTH THAT WON HER--HE CAN SATISFY CARLOTTA'S FASCINATION FOR EXPENSIVE JEWELRY.
HE'S AMASSED A FORTUNE AS AN UNDERTAKER! / ISN'T IT REMARKABLE THAT HE SHOULD INVARIABLY BE THE FIRST ONE UPON THE SCENE OF A DEATH?
NOW I MUST LEAVE YOU FOR A MOMENT, MY DEAR--TO GO DOWN TO MY WORKROOM WHERE I PREPARE THE DEAD FOR BURIAL.
OH--IT CAN BE ENTERED FROM INSIDE THE HOUSE?
YES, BUT I WANT YOU TO REMEMBER, CARLOTTA---NEVER--NEVER GO DOWN INTO THIS ROOM!

This should be a night like any other. You've worked these dark hours in the city morgue for many a year, but tonight is somehow different. Although your mind may try to deny it, you are certain can hear something outside in the passageway, something lumbering with malicious intent, groaning with a discord to suggest something no longer of this mortal plane. Fear now takes a hold, for you know the morgue to have been the perfect setting for the writers of those pre-code tales of terror. There are not as many tales locked away in the confines of the morgue as you may think. Those that did dare to tread these normally silent corridors set out to terrify their wickedly gleeful readership in a way that only amplifies the notoriety analogous with this era in comic book publishing.

Early on as the craze for horror comics swept through North America, Atlas's **Amazing Detective Cases** was trying to move away from the crime tales that had enjoyed considerable popularity a few years before. With its eleventh issue (March 1952) it had acquired all the accoutrements of a bona fide horror comic. While being only three pages in length "*Murder in the Morgue*" concealed that most grisly of secrets. The morgue's night watchman, Willie, having killed a man with his car now found his corpse spread across the slab. Maybe it was the machinations of his conscience, but for two weeks Willie had been haunted by the threat of an unseen presence. In a brutal strangulation close-up an innocent doctor met an unsavoury end, with Willie now facing a one way trip to the morgue himself. It was simple and straight to the point, but worked to a spine tingling effect.

A few yeas later Gene Colan's dark brush strokes breathed an unholy life into the tale "*The Men in the Morgue*", another entry in Atlas's darkly fabled **Adventures into Terror**, this its 28th appearance (February 1954). I have to confess to a continuing perplexity as to why comic book fans revere Gene more for his impeccable work on the superhero titles

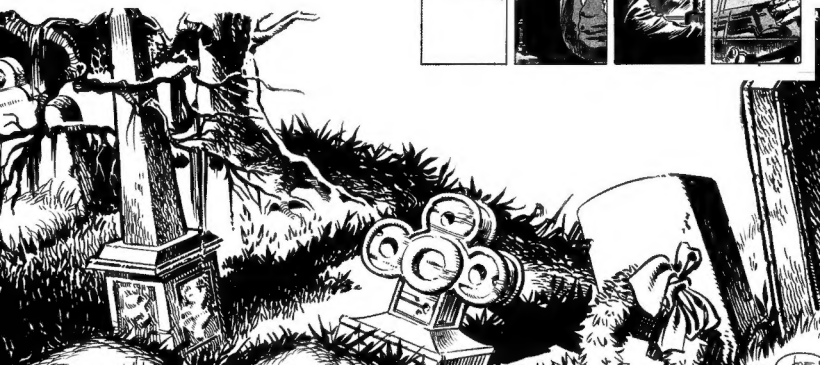
ANOTHER INTERMINABLE LENGTH OF TIME PASSES! EZRA HEARS THE SOUND OF A MOTOR AND KNOWS HE IS BEING DRIVEN INTO TOWN...TO THE MORGUE! THEN THE 'CLACK-CLACK' OF WHEELS! THEY'RE WHEELING HIM IN...
GET IN TOUCH WITH THIS GUY MITCHEL! FIND OUT WHAT HE WANTS TO DO WITH THIS STIFF!
OKAY!
YES! CHARLIE'LL HELP ME! HE'LL SEE I'M NOT DEAD!
SOMEONE IS DIALING A PHONE! THERE ARE VOICES...
THAT'S RIGHT! AN AUTOMOBILE ACCIDENT! YOU'LL TAKE CARE OF EVERYTHING? OKAY! BE RIGHT OVER? GOOD! WE WON'T DO ANYTHING TO HIM, THEN! RIGHT! BYE!

BET YOU DIDN'T HAVE THAT ENDING FIGURED OUT, EH? SEE HOW GOOD YOU ARE WITH THIS WEIRDIE! IF YOU CAN GUESS HOW THIS ONE IS GONNA TURN OUT, YOU'RE ENTITLED TO AN E FOR EXPERT!
THE MEN IN THE MORGUE
FREEZE, EVERYBODY! THIS IS A STICK-UP!
AN ADVENTURE INTO TERROR!
KEEP YOUR FACES TO THE WALL! COME ON, BARTENDER! YOU TOO!
THAT GUN UNDER THE BAR! SURE, I'LL GIVE IT SOON AS THEY MAKE A BREAK...
THE COSER WHO CALLS THE COPS BEFORE FIVE MINUTES, WILL GET A BELLY-FULL OF HOT LEAD!
I'M GONNA TEACH THOSE LOUSY HOODS A LESSON!

of the silver age, rather than his tenebrous displays on these ageing terrors. When you see artistry of this calibre it says so much for his work on the likes of **Daredevil** and **The Avengers**. Back however to the events at hand, as a couple of gun-toting crooks' misdemeanours force them to seek sanctuary in the local morgue. In a rather acrimonious twist they were never aware their victim was the morgue attendant's brother. Their slow death secured in the deep freeze was the kind of justice wilfully meted out so freely during these dark years of comic book horror. There were no cries for clemency echoing through these pages; their fate to this readership would have been deemed somewhat appropriate.

Crooked coroner Caleb Crockett's life of certifying gangland killings as natural deaths came to haunt him in the pages of **Adventures into Terror 31's** (May 1954) aptly titled "It Happened in the Morgue". The embalming fluid used in his experimentation seeped into the air consequently paralysing him. He was to awaken to find himself very much alive (but not so well) in the city morgue, about to be officially proclaimed dead by his cunning successor. Several of the scenes in this tale could only be described as hideous, yet so typical of this infamous title.

Only six months before **Astonishing 27's** (October 1953) "*The Deaf Ear*" related another tale of an employee working amongst the dead in the morgue. Old Charley was in possession of that rarest of gifts, a hearing aid that enabled him to listen to the dead. It was the perfect premise for a quite creepy yarn but his boss Mr Sheppard, disgruntled by his crazy claims put an end to any such notion, forbidding him to use this unusual hearing aid. The tale took an appreciably different turn with Sheppard meeting head on with a fatal accident before being returned to the morgue, seemingly dead.



THE CLOUDS ARE CLEARING..BUT WHAT I SEE IS STILL HAZY...VERY HAZY..ALL I CAN SAY IS THAT WITHIN TWENTY-FOUR HOURS YOU WILL HAVE A CHANGE OF LUCK!
A CHANGE OF LUCK..THAT CAN ONLY MEAN THINGS WILL GET BETTER! THEY COULDN'T BE ANY WORSE THAN THEY ARE NOW!
A SPINE-CHILLING MYSTERY TALE!
B-826
THE MAN IN THE MORGUE
A CHANGE OF LUCK, HE SAID..THE WAY MY STOMACH'S TALKING, EVEN A CUP OF JAVA AND A COUPLA EGGS WOULD BE A CHANGE OF LUCK!
I MUST'VE BEEN NUTS... THROWING MY LAST BUCK AWAY FOR A PHONY CRYSTAL READING! WHAT'S THE USE OF KIDDING MYSELF! I'VE HIT THE CELLAR! THERE'S NO CHANGING MY BAD LUCK!

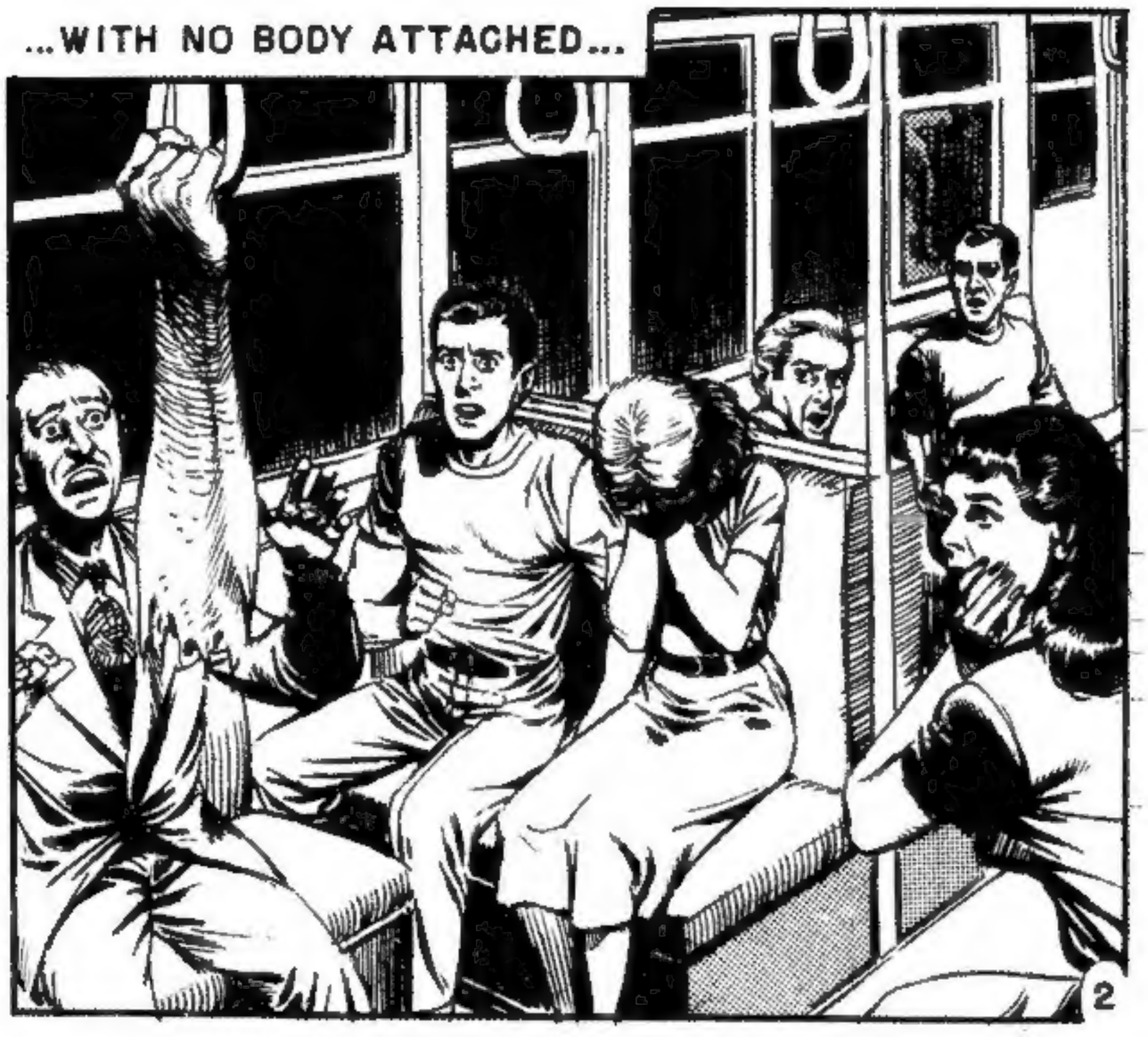
INDEED, INSIDE THE RECENTLY VACATED SUBWAY CAR, THOSE WHO REMAINED DID HAVE EXPRESSIONS OF VARIED EMOTIONS ON THEIR FACES. SOME WERE PALE... SOME CHALK-WHITE... SOME GREEN... SOME TURNED AWAY. THE ENTIRE CAR WAS STARING AT THE REMAINING ARM, HANGING ON THE STRAP...

Of course he wasn't dead, his body lay hopelessly paralysed. His salvation rested with Old Charlie, but the old boy had to hold onto his job, his extraordinary hearing aid hung up, no longer in use. There would be no more listening to the dead. Trust EC to conjure with a similar sick idea in the pages of **Haunt of Fear 10** (November-December1951) in the form of the memorable "*Grave Business*". It was a tale beautifully suited to the dark mastery of Ghastly Graham Ingels as a crooked undertaker lay motionless on a roadside after having boasted at a convention of his scurrilous exploits to his fellow professionals. As the lead tale for this issue it carefully drew the reader further into this man's despicable trade. There'd be no place for pity in these pages, only the darkness of a seeming eternity beneath the grave. EC's approach to horror wasn't necessarily steeped in the supernatural, they preferred the dark side of human nature which was again evident in "*Undertaking Palor*" first seen in **Tales from the Crypt 39** (Dec 1953- Jan 1954). Once again the morgue played host to the opening tale for this issue, with Jack Davis affirming his ability as a graphic story teller par excellence, adhering rigidly to the tight panel format prescribed by Al Feldstein's word intensive script. Al certainly believed in value for money! There was a morbid excitement for the local kids in their peering into the basement window of the local mortuary. That was until they discovered just what the undertaker was up to with the town's druggist. The boys soon became involved when the father of one of their friends was poisoned by this murderous twosome and their fate in a characteristic bizarre twist was sealed. This story was later adapted in the HBO television series, which sadly modernised the tale, moving it from its original setting in the 1950s.

The covers used on page 2:- Journey into Unknown Worlds #10, Mystery Tales #9 and Mystic #28. On page 4 panels from Tales from the Crypt #39 by Jack Davis and the enticing splash page from This Magazine is Haunted #19. Across the page Haunt of Fear 10's Graham Ingels offering, "Grave Business" and below Gene Colan's splash from Adventures into Terror #28.

Returning to that domain where the supernatural entered our world, could this be a case of mistaken identity or just the wrong day? The image introducing this piece comes from Russ Heath's chilling cover to **Spellbound 21** (April 1954) and with it came "*Men From the Morgue*" signed by a highly able combination I am not familiar with, Bean and Zakarin. When a couple of cadaverous entities arrived at Charlie Blaine's house to escort his deceased body into the after life, it surely had to be someone's idea of a sick joke. His wife appeared overly agitated but then of course the axe-wielding harpy would be, wouldn't she! If this tale of domestic intrigue had appeared in the pages of one of Bill Gaines' titles Jack Kamen would have had a field day.

Charlton's re-vamped version of **This Magazine is Haunted** introduced "*The Coffin Maker*" with its 19th issue (Au-



READY FOR A SIZZLING SESSION WITH OUR NEW SPINE-CHILLING CONCOCTION? GOOD! SINK YOUR FANGS INTO THIS WEIRDIE...THERE'S MUCH ADO ABOUT A GHOST WHO WASN'T QUITE ALL THERE...AND ALL BECAUSE DEAR, DEAR MARTHA WAS...
NOT DEAD ENOUGH
I'VE COME BACK, JONAS... FOR YOU!
ONE OF THE WORLD'S MOST MYSTIC TALES!
MARTHA! NO! NO! IT'S NOT POSSIBLE! YOU'RE DEAD! YOU DIED TWENTY YEARS AGO! IT CAN'T BE YOU...THE DEAD DON'T COME BACK!
JONAS MCALLISTER WAS A MAN WHO HAD WORKED HIMSELF INTO A POSITION OF RESPECT, RICHES AND LUXURY... AND NOW FOUND HIMSELF A BITTER, LONELY MAN WITH LITTLE TO LIVE FOR! MARTHA, HIS FIRST LOVE, WAS DEAD... WHILE SHEILA, HIS MONEY GRABBING WIFE, WAS VERY MUCH ALIVE...
IT HAPPENED FOR THE FIRST TIME ON WEDNESDAY, OCT. 3RD! HE WAS SITTING IN FRONT OF THE FIRE WITH THE BLINDS DRAWN OVER TIGHTLY SHUT WINDOWS, STARING AT HER PORTRAIT! FIRST HE HEARD THE MOAN AND THEN HE SAW HER...
I MUST BE OUT OF MY MIND! YOU'RE DEAD! GO AWAY! YOU'RE A GHOST! LEAVE ME ALONE!
MY DARLING, IT IS MARTHA WHOM YOU LOVED... WOULD YOU FORSAKE ME NOW?
I'VE COME BACK FROM THE GRAVE FOR YOU, JONAS! COME TO ME!
NO! NO! GO AWAY! I DON'T WANT TO DIE YET! THIS CAN'T BE! IT'S PROBABLY JUST A NIGHTMARE!

gust 954). This was a luscious mixture of temptation and terror as the townsfolk pondered over the marriage of the capricious Carlotta to the wizened coffin maker. The artwork in this tale is as absorbing as this tale itself, conjuring with the shadows to heighten the mounting terror while delighting in every opportunity to show Carlotta at her most breathtaking. There is nothing salacious about these pages, suggesting they had either seen print in an earlier Fawcett terror or formed part of the inventory purchased by Charlton some twelve months before, in the wake of Fawcett's demise. The discovery of the coffin maker's secret by his beauteous wife makes for a gripping piece of pre-Code terror, one that adds to the fascination surrounding this remarkable era.

Maybe if Mickey Laren had visited the wizened undertaker from **This Magazine is Haunted** he would have avoided his fate in **Mystery Tales 4's** (September 1952) "*Come to My Funeral!*" The story was proclaimed to have been plucked from "The Mystery Tales Morgue of Horror" and they weren't making it up, as this one fairly revelled in a murderer being cremated alive in a coffin in which he had foolishly sought refuge. The artwork was obscenely dark in these pages, but worked to deliver a tale illustrative of the period. **Journey into Unknown Worlds 10** presented "*The Undertaker*", one of those you would probably have been wise to avoid. Cyrus Scroggins offered a quite remarkable service, burial of the dead free of charge, soon putting the competition out of business nothing. There was no cremation scorching into these pages; the recently departed were instead bequeathed a unique burial encased in a coffin of bronze. It sounds ever so wonderful, until you learn Scroggins was in possession of a reviving serum that ushered the spirits to rise from the dead and then in customary fashion fall under his evil command. They were used to pilfer the homes of their former families and ultimately hunt down and kill them. Like so many before him, and after him come to think of it, Scroggins was beguiled by the prospect of world domination. The eternal incarceration of his cousin brutally brought a halt to his deranged dreams. **Mystery Tales 9's** four page "*The Man in the Morgue*" was presaged by an astounding cover particular to the Atlas years of terror. The actual story was in truth hardly memorable, although the art was very much reminiscent of Cat-Man's Charles M Quinlan and has even been suggested to be evocative of that underground icon Robert Crumb.

Across the page the splash from Mystery Tales #9, while next to it George Evans macabrely comic "Practical Choke" from Vault of Horror #30. Above we have the splash page from Mystic #28. Over the page the splash pages to Journey into Unknown Worlds 10's "The Undertaker" and Astonishing #27's "Deaf Ear".

The events in **Marvel Tales 115's** (June 1953) "*The Man With No Face!*" didn't occur in the morgue, but this sanitised hell hole wasn't so far off. The poor fellow on the cover looks to be decomposing, in a scene that could so easily have inspired the deranged mind of Charles Burns. Bill Bowles' life as an ambulance driver was soon to come

to an end, not that he would ever have been the slightest bit aware. This was a particularly gruesome offering, uncovering a macabre form of skin graft. Several bandaged corpses were laid out for your delectation within the walls of a private hospital, each devoid of any definable facial features. It was pre-Code hokum of a most unsettling kind reflecting the paranoia of the day.

Carl Wilcox's laboratory, seemingly supplied by Universal, may not have been a morgue, but I couldn't resist "*Death!*" from **Journey into Mystery 6** (March 1953) written by Stan Lee and drawn by that From the Tomb favourite Russ Heath. Wilcox, very much in keeping with the mood of these years, was a regular attendee at funerals. He couldn't get enough of them as his cadaverous desire to learn the secret of death precipitated his murdering an inebriated hobo. Upon securing the vagrant's lifeless body in his laboratory, he commenced the process of resurrecting him to life. Russ Heath as ever should be duly praised for his embellishing of an atmospheric sequence, so true to those early cinematic Frankenstein masterpieces. As for the secret of death, you should know better, his strangulation confers this mystery on into the next world. EC's "*For the Love of Death*" fiendishly rendered by Ghastly in **Haunt of Fear 13** (May-June 1952) introduced another regular at the graveside. Such was Morton Macawber's ghoulish love of this final ceremony after a bit of fatal skulduggery he endeavoured to hijack a coffin and met with a fate all too similar to that of the criminal reprobate in **Mystery Tales 4**, just as well deserved.

the UNDERTAKER
AHH... ANOTHER DEAD BODY TO WORK ON! THAT AD I PUT IN THE PAPERS IS BRINGING RESULTS. IT PAYS TO ADVERTISE! SOON THEY'LL COME FLOCKING TO MY DOORS... BEGGING ME TO TAKE IN THEIR DEAD!
CYRUS SCROGGINS WAS AN UNDERTAKER IN A SMALL TOWN NOT FAR FROM YOUR CITY / HE WAS AN UGLY, WEIRD-LOOKING CREATURE...AND HIS HIDEOUS APPEARANCE FRIGHTENED PEOPLE! NOBODY WENT TO HIS PLACE FOR A FUNERAL...NOT UNTIL THAT DAY HIS STRANGE ADVERTISEMENT APPEARED IN THE LOCAL PAPER...
HERE'S A CLIPPING OF THE UNUSUAL AD...
FREE FUNERAL FOR YOUR DEPARTED LOVED ONES
ABSOLUTELY NO CHARGE! FLOWERS, COFFIN, LIMOUSINES GRAVE AND TOMBSTONE... ALL FREE...EVERYONE WELCOME
WHEN A DEATH OCCURS IN YOUR FAMILY CALL... CYRUS SCROGGINS UNDERTAKER
THERE MUST BE A CATCH TO IT!
YEAH, WHY WOULD HE GO ALL THAT FOR NOTHING?
I DON'T KNOW... BUT I WOULDN'T EVEN LET MY DOG BE BURIED BY THAT HORRIBLE CREATURE!
EVERYBODY IN TOWN SAW AND READ THE AD...AND THEY WERE ALL SKEPTICAL...
ALL NAMES AND PLACES IN THESE STORIES ARE FICTITIOUS ANY SIMILARITY BETWEEN ACTUAL PERSONS OR PLACES AND THOSE USED IN THESE STORIES IS PURELY COINCIDENTAL

WELL, IN THIS WORLD, THEY SAY, THERE'S A WOMAN FOR EVERY MAN...OR MAYBE IT'S LIZARDS! TAKE YOUR CHOICE! AND HERE'S A MAN WHO HAS A CHOICE TO MAKE TOO... FOLLOW THE ORDERS OF HIS BOSS, OR LOSE HIS JOB! YOU'LL GET A CHANGE OUT OF THIS SHOCKING WEIRDIE!
THE DEAF EAR!
HIS SHIFT WAS OVER AND MR. SHEPPARD, THE MORGUE BOSS, WAS ABOUT TO LEAVE WHEN...
THE EDITORS GUARANTEE THAT THIS IS ONE OF THE MOST ASTONISHING STORIES YOU'VE EVER READ!
SHOULD I RUN?
OR STAY?
...OR CALL THE COPS?
OR WHAT?

On a lighter note, three medical students enjoyed more than a prank or two, most of which seemed to begin in the morgue. Their buffoonery was revealed in "*Practical Choke*" from the pages of **Vault of Horror 30** (April-May 1953). George Evans was assigned with bringing this piece to a mocking sense of life and as would be expected produced a stirring job to capture this diabolical sense of humour. The rancid finale was pure EC; maybe not exactly blood curdling horror, but you would have laughed your way to the grave with this one all those years ago. The tale also made for quite a grisly John Craig cover that appeared to neglect the wicked sense of humour observed within. I suppose it would have been unwise to have given too much of the game away!

Next time you work late in the morgue, keep on eye over your shoulder, you never know just what might be stirring. Those nasty old horrors from the 1950s got a little too much of a kick out of this deathly institution, but they were only macabre fables, stories for the kids, weren't they….

A big thank you to Frank Motler for the assist on this piece and some of the images.

It's an Entertaining Comic!
Part 3: WEIRD FANTASY
By Peter Enfantino

FOR STEVE DORNER, THE UNIMAGINABLE DEPTHS OF THIS MYSTERIOUS BLACK HOLE IN SPACE HELD A PROBLEM HE HAD TO SOLVE! BUT HIS STRUGGLES TO FIND THE ANSWER PROVED THAT...
ONLY TIME WILL TELL
AN EERIE-SCIENCE SUSPENSTORY!
DO YOU REALLY THINK THAT YOU CAN AFFECT TIME WITH THAT CONTRAPTION, STEVE?
YES, IF MY THEORIES ARE RIGHT! NOW, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, THIS MACHINE DOES...
WELL, I HAVEN'T GOT TIME FOR THIS HAZY SCIENTIFIC STUFF! SO LONG!
HMMM? WHA... OH, YES, SURE. SEE YOU TOMORROW!

THE UNBELIEVABLE EVENTS LEADING UP TO THE...
COSMIC RAY BOMB EXPLOSION!
THE TIME: A COLD NOVEMBER NIGHT. THE PLACE: THE OFFICES OF THE PUBLISHER OF "WEIRD SCIENCE" COMIC. NIGHT. THE ROOMS ARE DARK, EXCEPT FOR A SMALL LIGHT IN THE OFFICE OF THE PUBLISHER. THE DESK IS PILED WITH DOLLAR BILLS. UNBUTTONED... SLEEVES ROLLED UP AND FILLING A LONE ASHTRAY WITH CIGARETTE BUTTS... A BLANK SHEET OF PAPER STANDS IN A TYPEWRITER...
TOMORROW'S THE BIG DAY...AL! WE'VE GOT TO GET A TERRIFIC LEAD STORY! OR OLD PHANEAS T. BARLESS WILL HAVE OUR HEADS!
"M-BYWORD, BILLS & CANTHINK OF A TRIVIA!..."

No one even turned their head when EC Comics' MOON GIRL became A MOON, A GIRL....ROMANCE with its ninth issue in 1949 and, if we're to believe William M. Gaines, EC's publisher, not many more noticed when that title was dropped for the catchier WEIRD FANTASY in 1950. MOON GIRL featured the title superheroine created by Sheldon Moldoff and written by Gardner Fox, while A MOON, A GIRL.... was stocked with love stories with titles like "I Was Jilted and Had No Desire to Live" (written by Al Feldstein), "I Thought I Loved My Boss" (art by Wally Wood), and "Hearts Along the Ski Trail" (also by Wood). MOON GIRL's real claim to fame is that it featured EC's first horror story, "Zombie Terror" in issue 5 (by Johnny Craig). So, lost in a sea of romance titles, A MOON , A GIRL.... gives way to EC's first science fiction anthology title (well, technically it's tied for first since the premiere issue of WEIRD SCIENCE appeared the same month).[1]

WEIRD FANTASY didn't exactly get off to an auspicious debut with a story called "Am I Man - Or Machine?" written and drawn

Al Feldstein (with a little co-authoring by Gaines), inspired by the disembodied brain stories that were the rage at the time (Curt Siodmak's novel DONOVAN'S BRAIN being the most famous example). Roger Harvey shows up at the door of his fiance Diane, who's a little shocked to see him since he was killed in a car crash two years before. Roger explains that, though his body was killed in the accident, his brain was kept alive by two brilliant scientists in a jar of liquid.[2] With amazing technologies, the two doctors manage to create a plastic body for Harvey's brain (one that is, amazingly, so lifelike no one notices Harvey looks like a lifesize GI Joe doll) and teach him how to use it. When Roger finishes his story, Diane sighs and admits that two years was a long wait and she went off looking for love elsewhere. Though she's married, she offers to dump her husband and run away with Roger. Realizing that he can't *give her the love she'll need*, he instead tells Diane that the whole story was an initiation prank and, one would think, heads off to find a window mannequin he can call his own. Of course, my warped brain wants to see the alternate ending where Roger takes Diane up on her offer and shows her just what this plastic body can do!

As you'll see, writing synopsis' for these stories is a little more work than those for CRIME SUSPENSTORIES or THE HAUNT OF FEAR (as I recall, I used the phrase "so he kills his wife" over 100 times in those first two articles), because these tales are more than just a decent idea with real nice art. These are stories populated by fascinating characters caught up in bewildering and deadly adventures. One major reason why the SF titles were not as popular as the horror line is the text heavy nature of both WEIRD SCIENCE and WEIRD FANTASY. They had to be. You can't illustrate a theory like you can a rising corpse.

As in the pages of the horror titles, Gaines and Feldstein borrowed liberally from other sources (H. P. Lovecraft's imaginary occult bible NECRONOMICON is featured in "The Black Arts" in the August 1950 issue), but for the first time, the other sources were alive and paying attention. When the two EC-men morphed the Ray Bradbury stories "Kaleidoscope" and "The Rocket Man" into the powerful morality play "Home to Stay" in the June 1952 issue, Bradbury semi-playfully sent EC a letter inquiring if the men had forgotten to send him his adaptation payment.[3] Once the "oversight" had been corrected, Bradbury authorized his stories to be used in the

THE LAST CITY
STRANGE! THE CITY IS PERFECTLY PRESERVED...BUT ALL THE PEOPLE ARE DEAD! THERE'S NO SIGN OF LIFE ANYWHERE! WHAT HAPPENED HERE?
IT IS A STRANGE TALE, INDEED! LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT IT! THAT CITY WAS ONCE KNOWN AS NEW YORK!
IT BEGAN IN WASHINGTON...BEFORE THE EARTH WAS PLUNGED INTO WORLD WAR III! THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT WAS FRANTICALLY BUILDING FOR A DEFENSE AGAINST THE DREADED ATOM BOMB! FOR, YOU SEE, THE SECRET WAY OF DEFENSE HAD A WEAPON...
SO AHEAD, PROFESSOR HARLOW! DEMONSTRATE YOUR FANTASTIC INVENTION!
AS YOU SEE, SIR, I HAVE PLACED UPON YOUR DESK THIS SMALL MECHANISM!

THE ENEMIES OF THE COLONY
THE U.C.A. (GALACTIC COLONIZATION AUTHORITY) ROCKET-SHIP, P-2, BUMPED GENTLY TO REST ON THE FRIENDLY SURFACE OF THE STRANGE PLANET* AS THE GIANT AND ROCKET-FUEL EXHAUST DRIFTED AWAY, A TINY PORT IN THE MONSTROUS SLEEKNESS HELL HAD OPENED...
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! THE GALACTIC COLONIZATION AUTHORITY HAVEN YEARS TO HEADSTONE, A NEW HOME!
A BUTTON WAS PRESSED, AND SOMEWHERE INSIDE THE SHIP A MOTOR STARTED* A SLIT APPEARED IN THE SIDE OF THE GIGANTIC CRAFT* AND A LADDER PROJECTED ITSELF! THEN FEET CLEARED DOWN* LAUGHING GIRLS DIED... TAILLESS WOMEN... EIGHT-FACED MEN...
WELCOME! WELCOME TO TALLA! WELCOME ONE AND ALL!
THE GATHERED MULTITUDE THAT HAD COME TO MEET THE NEW ARRIVERS THRONGED ABOUT THEM...SHOUTING...GREETING OLD FRIENDS WITH GUSTO AND SPENT THEIR WHOLE WIVES ON THE DEAD-SKIP STANDS* ABOUT
ATTENTION! ATTENTION! ALL PERSONS ARE REQUESTED TO COME TO ADMINISTRATION OFFICE! CAPTAIN HORNEY...

EC titles. In all, 28 tales (including the two unauthorized) by Bradbury were adapted by EC (6 of which appeared in WEIRD FANTASY). Bradbury's words seem to have brought out the best in EC's artists (not that they were otherwise slouches), as evidenced by "The Million Year Picnic," a "Martian Chronicles" story about the last human family left on Mars with fabulous art by John Severin and Will Elder.[4]

One thing becomes crystal clear after reading a full run of this title: Wally Wood was to WEIRD FANTASY what "Ghastly" Graham Ingels was to the horror titles. He not only drew the lion's share of stories, he also wrote a few of them. You'll see his name pop up quite a few times in the next few pages.

ONLY TIME WILL TELL (#13, June 1950)
Art: Wally Wood/Story: Harry Harrison.

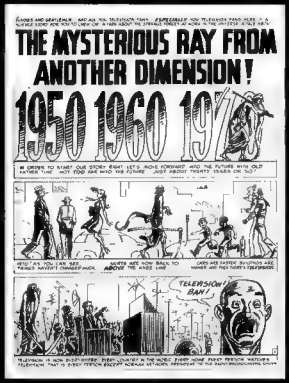
Steve Dorner is working on a time travel machine but just can't seem to get it right. One day, a hole opens in his wall, a man steps through and asks Steve to accompany him through the portal to the future where he's working on a similar gadget. Evidentally, Steve knows something Mr. Future doesn't. Steve helps the man and then ducks back through the portal, clutching half of the blueprint for Mr. Future's machine. Having only half of the blueprint, Steve is only able to get his portal to semi-work. After decades of work, Steve finally cracks the code, but needs some assistance. Realizing that the only man who knows enough about the portal to help is himself, he steps into his time tunnel and goes back twenty years to enlist the aid of...Steve Dorner. When the big picture finally hits Steve, he's left to ponder the circle he's eternally trapped in. Fabulous time travel tale that raises lots of complicated and fun questions. As the scientist himself wonders about the half of the blueprint he has in his possession after twenty years:

"It matches perfectly with the half that was just left here. That means that the half of the blue print which my younger self just tore off and took back with him, and THIS HALF that I have here - which I took from myself twenty years ago - are the same piece. Therefore, I only managed to build this machine with the aid of the half of the diagram that I took from myself! But who originally drew the half

that I stole, copied and later put in the drawer?"

Who indeed?

Harry Harrison, the author of "Only Time Will Tell," later became a major force in science fiction, authoring hundreds of novels and short stories, including four very popular SF series: The Stainless Steel Rat, the Deathworld trilogy, Bill the Galactic Hero (a hilarious spoof of SF that later became a comic book series), and Eden (intelligent dinosaurs). Harrison also wrote MAKE ROOM, MAKE ROOM (1966), the basis for the film SOYLENT GREEN (1973).



COSMIC RAY BOMB EXPLOSION (#14, August 1950)
Art: Al Feldstein/Story: Al Feldstein and Bill Gaines

Al Feldstein and Bill Gaines are brainstorming stories before the ominous deadline doom comes crashing down around them. When "trips to the moon" and "time machine" stories prove useless, Bill lays out his idea for a "cosmic ray bomb," a device "thousands of times more devastating than an atomic bomb." To the dismay of the scientists working on the weapon, the bomb is stolen and, while explaining as much to the Secretary of Defense, detonated over Washington. Boom! End of story, right? In the comic *within* the comic, that's just how it ends, but Al and Bill soon find they've stumbled on something when they're visited by F.B.I. agents who want to know just how the duo got ahold of classified info on the new "cosmic ray bomb!" As the two exit the building, chuckling about how whacky the situation is, we see a plane fly overhead and Washington is destroyed.

It's evident from "Cosmic Ray Bomb Explosion" that the creators behind WEIRD FANTASY had a lot of fun spoofing themselves and the often outlandish science factoids they would invest their stories with.

THE LAST CITY (#16, December 1950)
Art: Al Feldstein/Story: Al Feldstein and Bill Gaines

Two visitors from Mars hover over what's left of New York and tell the wild story of Professor Farley's Electro-Magnetic Force-Field Generator. Years before, in an effort to stave off atomic annihilation, Professor Farley creates a machine that enables him to cover all of New York with a protective shield. Unfortunately, the gizmo proves to be too effective when the Professor attempts to turn it off and finds it's permanent. With no way to ship in food, the inhabitants of new York die a slow, painful death. Ironically, the world becomes embroiled in World War III and the earth is left a smoldering pile of ashes, save for New York, whose skyscrapers live on under the indestructible force field. Ivat and Cugo, the two narrating Saturnites agree that New York should remain as a museum, a testament to what "earthmen had once...and destroyed."

"The Last City" is no-hold-barred science fiction. Whereas other publishers (Atlas of the 1950s for instance) would have its protagonists devise a way to destroy the force field and rain happiness and relief down upon mankind, Gaines and Feldstein

almost gleefully kill off an entire planet and leave only remnants for alien passersby. One panel stands out as particularly grim: two starving New Yorkers stand over a dying man; one says: "He'll be dead, soon!" the other answers: "Light a fire!"

THE MYSTERIOUS RAY FROM ANOTHER UNIVERSE (#16, December 1950)
Art and Story: Harvey Kurtzman

It's 1970 and everyone in the world is captivated, no, obsessed with television. Everyone, that is, except radio station magnate Norman Network. Norman can't seem to get his head around why so many people find the tube fascinating. With his station revenues falling to an all-time low, Norman devises a plan to rid the world of TV. He hires a scientist to travel the world, in search of any disease that can be linked to television viewing. The scientist discovers that TV can lead to disintegration and, for a time, Norman wins his battle. It's only in the end that Norman discovers that humans watch TV in order to disappear (literally) and he's very soon the last man on earth (and without a TV, to boot). Prescient satire in the Kurtzman style. Could very easily have found a place in MAD Magazine a few years later.

THE ENEMIES OF THE COLONY (#8, July 1951)
Art and story: Wally Wood

On a distant planet, The Galactic Colonization Authority is on the verge of ridding itself of the dangerous Hydra-files, creatures with a taste for the G.C.A.'s favorite pets, the monkey-like Mokos (which reproduce faster than rabbits). After the final Hydra-file is eliminated, the G.C.A., to their dismay, find that the Mokos are actually carnivores and the larger monsters were keeping the population down. A wonderful alien story as only Wally Wood could illustrate (the Mokos have the trademark Woodian "popping eyes"). As strange as it may seem, the climax of "The Enemies of the Colony" is reminiscent of the famous scene in John Ford's THE SEARCHERS where John Wayne and his "posse" are drawn away from the ranch only to realize they've set up the ranchers for an Indian raid.

THE MUTANTS (#10, November 1951)
Art: Wally Wood/Story: Al Feldstein

The fallout from a Hydrogen bomb test create a race of mutants. "Normal America" rises up in fear to fight these passive mutants and eventually herd them onto a couple of spaceships. Soon after liftoff, it's discovered that a meteor is hurtling towards Earth. The only possible way to divert the big rock is for one of the ships to fly straight into it. Should the mutants sacrifice themselves for the millions who shunned them or set off for another planet where they can find peace? Yes, there are the obvious McCarthy-esque trappings, but this is just terrific storytelling with plenty of pathos. Wally Wood once again demonstrates why he was the best science fiction artist who ever graced the EC titles. Strange that the mutants are held "off-camera" for three pages and when they're finally revealed, it's so very matter-of-fact.

THE END (#13, May 1952)
Art: Wally Wood/Story: Bill Gaines and Al Feldstein

A high power telescope reveals that a comet is hurtling towards Earth. Before it can collide with Earth, it disintegrates but the massive radiation leaves all life on our planet sterile. In another generation, all life will vanish. Two scientists are, luckily, working on a time travel machine and devise a plan to go back in time before the comet and transport virile men and women to the future where they can repopulate the planet. They build their gizmo on the site of what once was Grand Central Station, citing the large amounts of foot traffic as the main reason. Unfortunately for the two well-meaning geniuses, they find their portal is located inside the Men's room! A fun, ironic climax to another Wood masterpiece.

HOME TO STAY (#13, May 1952)
Art: Wally Wood/Story: Bill Gaines and Al Feldstein

A rocket pilot of the future continually promises his wife and son he'll give up the interplanetary life but, like an addict, he can't fight what he craves. Every couple years he comes home to see his growing son. One night the boy wishes on a falling star that his father will come back "home to stay," not knowing the star is actually his father burning up in Earth's atmosphere after a rocket mishap. Forget that this is the infamous "Bradbury plagiarism" story and experience a powerful tale with a tragic climax, the kind of experience you won't get from any other 1950s comic company.

THE ALIENS (#17, January 1953)
Art: Al Williamson/Story: Bill Gaines and Al Feldstein

Three aliens are en route to Earth to warn us that Atomic power is not always a good thing when they witness the drawbacks for themselves. They watch as Earth is blown to bits and, curious about the civilization, land on a large part of the rubble. They come across an issue of WEIRD FANTASY #17 and discover that the third story is about three aliens en route to Earth to warn us…

A funny parody of all the "time bends back on itself" tales found in EC's sci-fi comics, helped along nicely by Al Williamson's art and capped off with a rare last page splash. Spa Fon!

ZERO HOUR (#18, March 1953)
Art: Jack Kamen/Story: Ray Bradbury and Al Feldstein

A precocious seven year old Mink plays a new game called "Invasion" with the local kids. The tots are collecting household items, conversing with invisible pals, and spouting dialog like "Beam 4-9-7-A-B-X." Mink's mom gets worried that maybe there's more to her daughter than just a very active imagination.

Ray Bradbury spun more magic with children (no writer could blend childhood and dark fantasy like Bradbury), the only drawback being the Jack Kamen art. While Kamen has his fans, I remain unimpressed with the standard "talking head" narrative. The artist's payoff panel (the unveiling of the invaders) looks more suited to a ghost story than science fiction.

"Zero Hour" proved to be very lucrative for Ray Bradbury. In addition to the WEIRD FANTASY classic, the story was also adapted several times for radio (by SUSPENSE, ESCAPE, X MINUS ONE, and DIMENSION X) and, in 1992, for RAY BRADBURY THEATER, a syndicated TV show that lasted 65 episodes (over 6 seasons), all revolving around Bradbury's short stories.

THE MILLION YEAR PICNIC (#21, October 1953)
Art: John Severin and Will Elder/Story: Ray Bradbury and Al Feldstein

Powerful Bradbury "Martian Chronicle" tale of the last human family left on Mars shows just how good EC science fiction could get when the best writing collided with the best art. Resembles a FATHER KNOWS BEST on Mars.

Severin's art as usual is fabulous and meshes perfectly with Elder's inks[5].

NEXT UP: FRONTLINE COMBAT

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND RECOMMENDED READING

The EC Library: Weird Fantasy. 4 hardcover volumes. (Russ Cochran, publisher. 1980). Reprinting of the entire series, with story-by-story notes and critique by Bill Spicer, John Benson, Mark Evanier and Doug Menville. Also features insightful interviews with Gaines and Feldstein.

Weird Fantasy (22 issues, EC Comics, June 1950-December 1953). (reprinted by Russ Cochran/Gemstone, January 1992-October 1998).

THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SCIENCE FICTION Hardcover, by John Clute and Peter Nicholls. (St. Martin's Press, 1993)

TALES OF TERROR/THE EC COMPANION Hardcover, by Fred Von Bernewitz and Grant Geissman. (Gemstone/Fantagraphics, 2000)

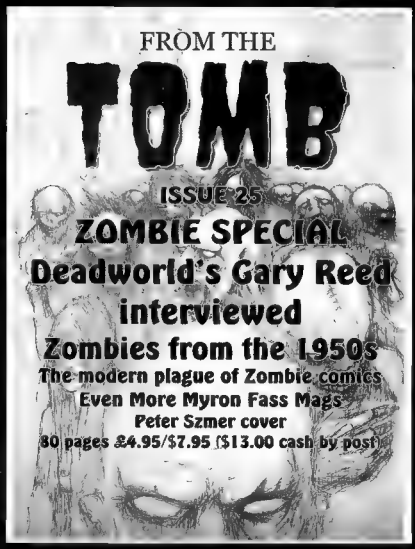
[1] All these title changes must have played havoc with the old-timer collectors out there who didn't have the internet or Overstreet to consult. An even odder switch than MOON GIRL/ROMANCE to WEIRD FANTASY was SADDLE JUSTICE to WEIRD SCIENCE! Add to that the fact that WEIRD FANTASY re-numbered in mid-stream. The first five issues continued the numbering from A MOON, A GIRL... and then began its own numbering with issue #6. This, of course, means that there are two completely different issues of #13-17!

[2] In what has to be one of the classic bits of dialogue ever to grace an EC, one of the scientists explains to Roger: "we took (the brain) from your body, immediately after you died in a fatal automobile accident! We were lucky our laboratory was so near to the scene! Dr. Walker and I worked fast that night! No one ever knew! We returned your body to the spot!" Now I know that criminal forensics wasn't as advanced at the beginning of the 1950s (and that's assuming that the story is *set* in the 1950s), but wouldn't the coroner have noticed that the body had no brain?

[3] The original letter is reprinted in TALES OF TERROR/ THE EC COMPANION (page 78).

[4] For those not in the know, THE MARTIAN CHRONICLES is a collection of stories dealing with the colonization (and aftermath of the deed) of Mars. Amazingly, the "Chronicles" began life as a series of short stories until Bradbury wrangled them into bookform. THE MARTIAN CHRONICLES could very well be the first "Pop Concept Album." Ignore the dreadful TV mini-series at all costs.

[5] For those interested, the other four Bradbury adaptations were "there will come soft rains...", "King of the Grey Spaces" (based on "R is for Rocket"), "I, Rocket", and "The Silent Towns". The "unauthorized" "Home to Stay" was based loosely on "Kaleidoscope" and "The Rocket Man". Eight of the EC Bradbury science fiction stories (from WF and WEIRD SCIENCE) were collected in paperback as THE AUTUMN PEOPLE (Ballantine, 1960).



Small Press

Spaceship Away.... Part 13 Autumn 2007 £6.99 EU £9.00 Overseas £10.00
Rod Barzilay, 8 Marley Close, Preston, Weymouth, Dorset, DT3 6DH

With this issue **Spaceship Away...** begins its fifth year, a remarkable achievement for such an impossibly lavish publication dedicated to what is in essence a very British phenomenon. Part 13 proves yet another unsullied addition to this title's sumptuous catalogue, as resplendent as ever in its full colour gloss pages. The lead Dan Dare tale "*Green Nemesis*" written by Rod and beautifully rendered by Don Harley continues with its twentieth and twenty-first instalments. Just as with the original series, the reader will be left on the very edge of his seat as the episodes race to a climax. The idea of a collected album appearing once the story reaches its conclusion must now be very tempting.

Chilt… charges on… momentum so reminiscent of the British comics of the past, in fact Tacconi's artwork rekindles that sense of nostalgia from my earliest comic reading days hooked on **TV21**. Dan Dare may be conspicuous by his absence, but the content observes the adventurous spirit of this legendary comic book character and then takes off into a world of its own. Sydney Jordan's Hal Starr and Keith Page's Rocket Pilot both continue at a pace and the issue bows out with more Dan Dare, this time standing before "*The Gates of Eden*". Spaceship Away never lets you down, proud in its celebration of the legacy bequeathed by Dan Dare Pilot of the Future.

The Erotic Adventures of Space Babe 113 Parts 2 & 3 £2.40/$3.95 each
Soaring Penguin Ltd., 4 Florence Terrace, Kingston Vale, London, SW15 3RU.

Space Babe now carries a health warning to alert the reader to the hazards of this comic book **Karma Sutra**; trust me, it's that kind of read. Creator John Mayberry has a unique approach, seemingly minimalist in style but boundless in its expressionism. Each of the A5 pages that make up these issues, and the one before it, use a rigid twelve panel grid. For many this may appear somewhat restrictive, but not for Mr. Mayberry. There is so much going on within these panels, you will find yourself compelled to linger and absorb what really amounts to the scant detail in each. Every single one of them is vital to the story as a whole, it is an exceptional way of story telling

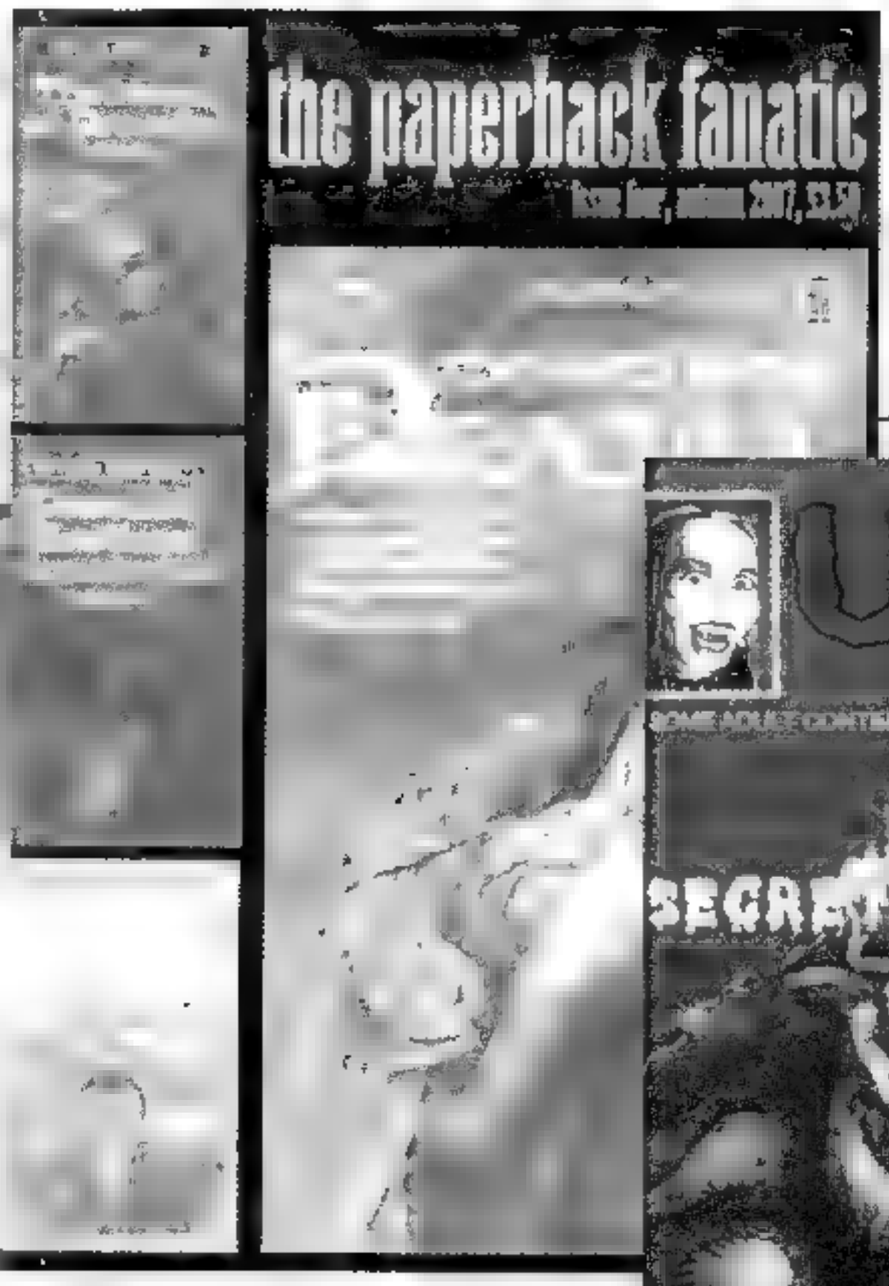
Science fiction fans will of course love it, but those with a penchant for the sexually anarchic will also find these issues highly amusing. There is nothing of its ilk currently on sale either side of the Atlantic. This is a comic book that could very soon rise to cult status, I'd secure a copy now before it sells out.

Pulpmania 1 £4.99 $7.99 2006
Justin Marriott email: justin@justincult-print.free-online.co.uk

This sixty-eight page album is a testament to Justin's love of the exploitative pulp style books published during the early 1970s. It is a treasure-trove of almost forgotten subculture. The paperbacks mentioned in this journal seem to go hand in hand with the horror comics of the day; it was not uncommon to find them in the same shops, especially on a family day out to the seaside. Tut-tut-tut!

In this edition the author of countless books Peter Cave gives a very frank interview. More than thirty-five years ago, Peter was given the opportunity to write the seminal **Chopper**. Typed up in only six weeks the book proved a phenomenal

Part 13 | Autumn 2007



success. So followed a series of Hells Angels novels each consumed by a biker crazy readership. How many of you still remember the science fantasy series **Gor**, which enjoyed its heyday during the 1970s? There were actually twenty-six of these titles written over a twenty-eight year period, although the last was written eighteen years after the apparent finale.

So follows an illuminating interview and examination of that NEL favourite Guy N Smith. For anyone with a passion for these crazy paperbacks this is an absolute must. Michel Parry and James Herbert also fall under the microscope; it doesn't get any better.

Bedlam 7 July 2007 £3.50
Usher 5 July 2007 £3.50
John Gallagher, Chimera Arts, 13 Foliage Crescent, Brinnington, Stockport, SK5 8AP

Regular readers of these titles will be saddened to hear the news of their cancellation. It is indeed the end of an era. Editing these anthology titles has taken its toll; too many times John has had to fill in, often sacrificing the quality key to his own work. Fear not for John Gallagher will make his return. In the very near future he will be back with his very own tales of terror, some of which are showcased in these the latest appearances of **Bedlam** and **Usher**.

Now that John has taken the decision to go it alone, his work has gone on from strength to strength. These rate as probably the finest issues of these series, paving the way for a brave new world at Chimera Arts. *Lady Satan* and *Razor Blade Smile* will continue. Aleister Cowley's *Moonchild* should also be a part of this new generation of dark comics, the introduction in Bedlam 7 certainly intimated at the untapped potential in the man's works (more on this next issue). There is a new found confidence evident in each of these issues, one that many of us took for granted only a few years ago. For the newcomer this is an excellent opportunity to jump on board and for the long time reader, these are well worth hunting down.

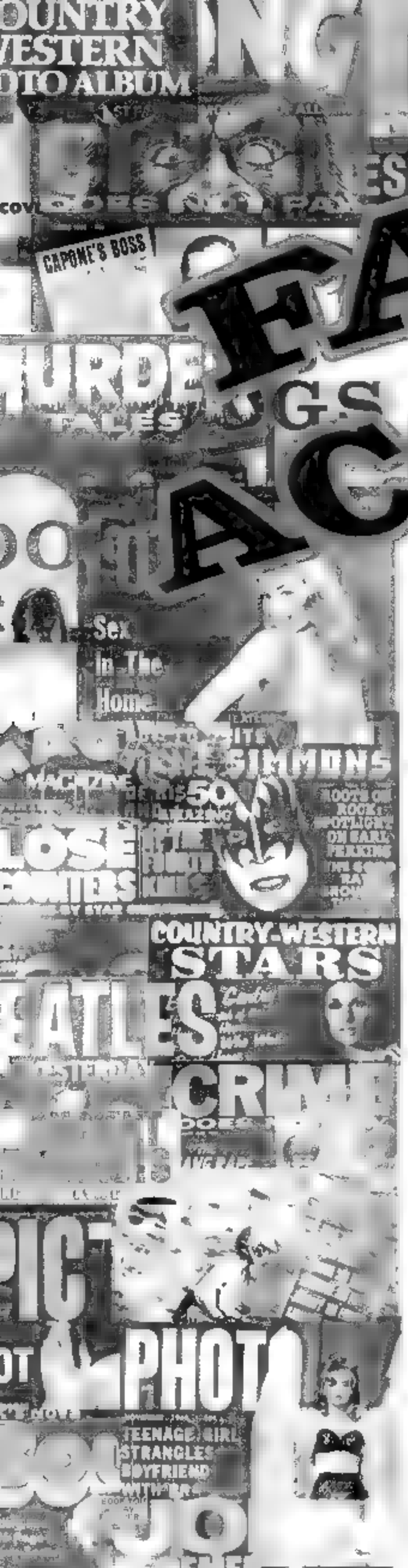
Paperback Fanatic 3 & 4 August & October 2007. £4.00 each
Justin Marriott email: justin@justincult-print.free-online.co.uk

These issues are closely related to the previously mentioned **Pulp Mania**, although these come in a thirty-two page A4 magazine format. If you are a fan or have a nostalgic leaning towards those crazy pulp style paperbacks of the early 1970s, then this is the magazine for you. I know of few people who can combine Justin's knowledge of this era with such unlimited enthusiasm. They are an absolute pleasure to read.

There is an exploration of the Kung Fu books of these years, of which they were many, as well as the war books of Leo Kessler. I can remember seeing these on countless market stalls as I hunted through the boxes of comics. Psycho sexual pulp drama also gets the Marriott treatment, oh it's lurid in its own way, but there is more to this smutty spectacle than meets the eye. Articles and indexes on Sphere horror, Dennis Wheatley and the science fiction art of Bruce Pennington will be of interest to many readers of this magazine. I am sure there will be plenty here that you soon remember. If exploitation in modern literature is your game then this is an essential package, and for those of you who still enjoy memories of your teenage reading there's no better way of making its rediscovery. As you'll recall most of these books left that fellow Shakespeare in the starting blocks, they did, didn't they...

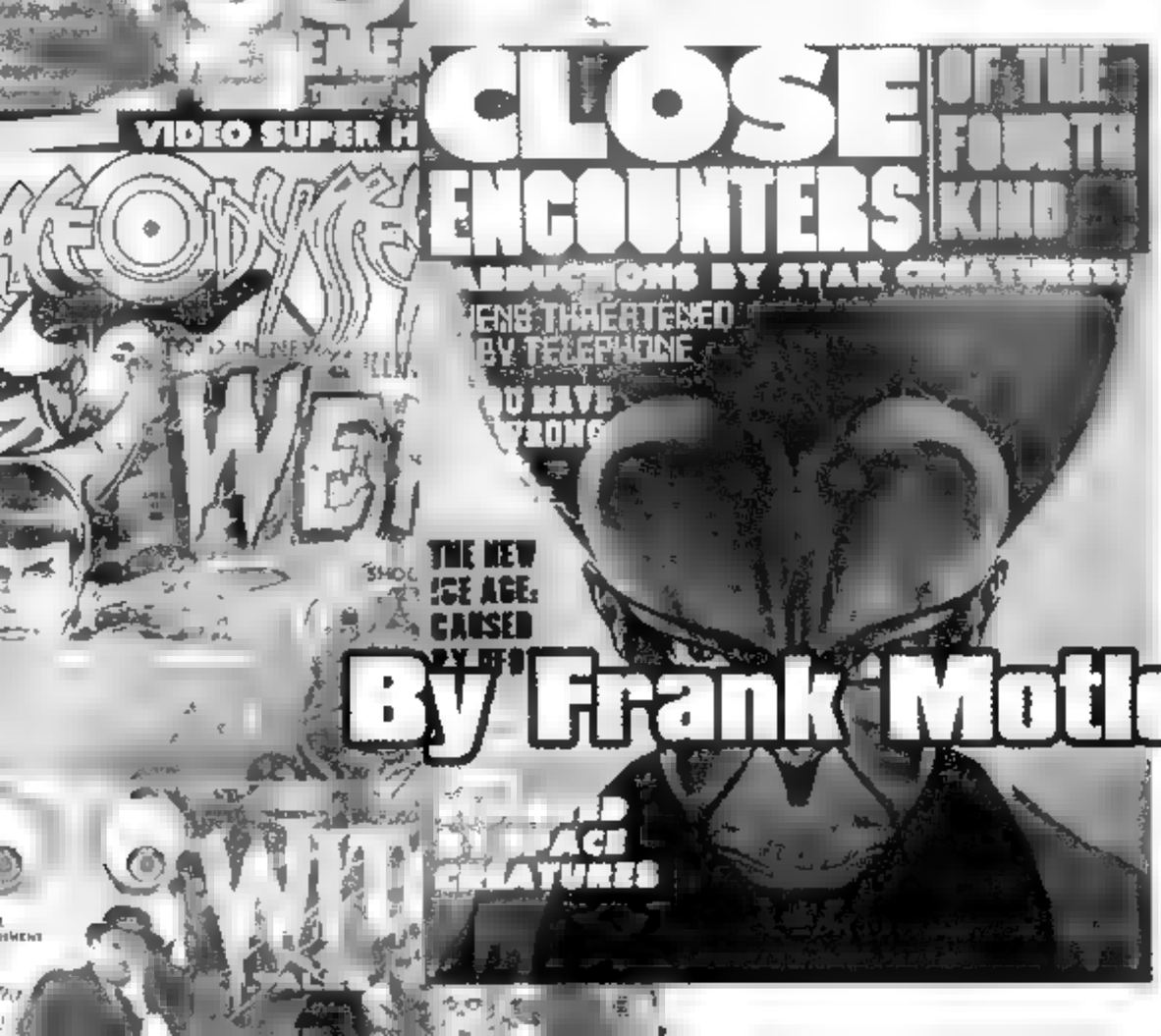
FASS-ION ACCESSORY

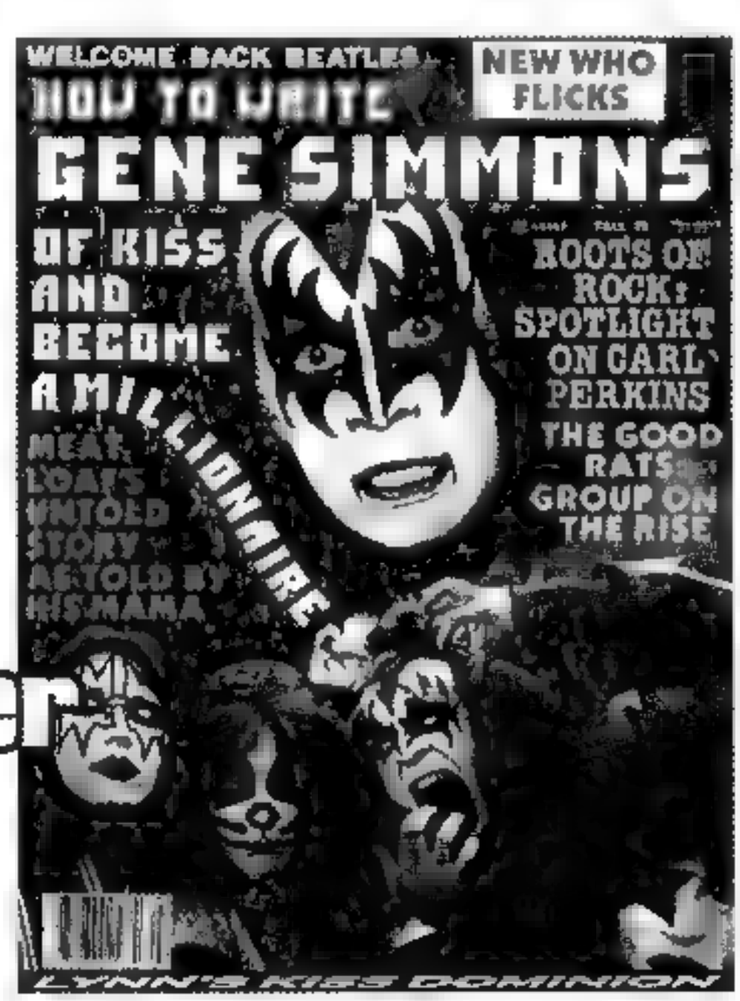
Part I

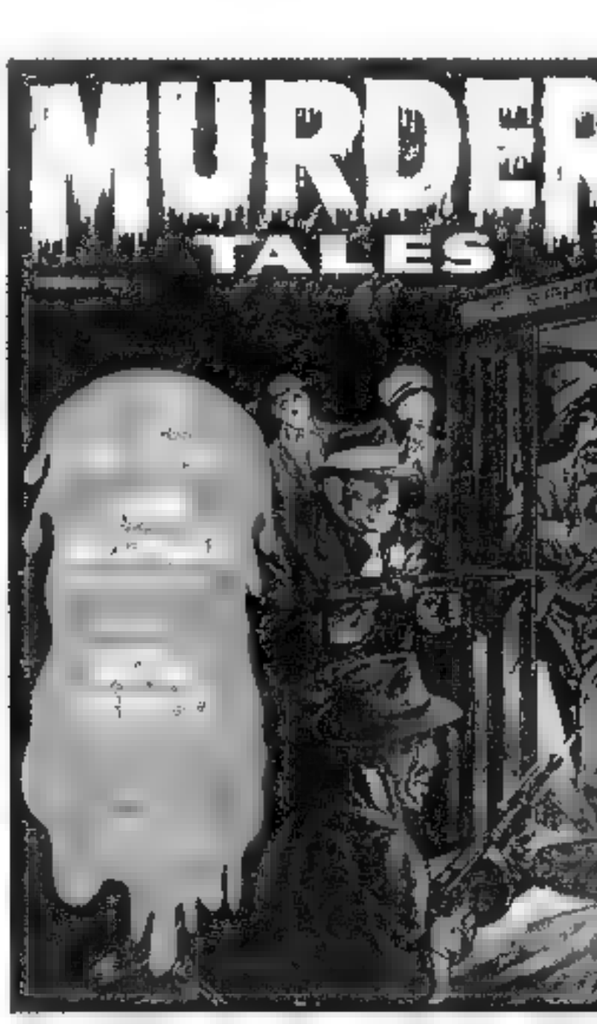


I, Fass

Here is the interlinking history about that extraordinary artist, editor and publisher Myron Fass (1926-2006), covering the magazines and brief foray into comics publishing from 1956 until the mid 1980s. It supplements information supplied in Gene M. Broxson's scholarly two-parter *"Through The Eerie Years"* (available only in **From The Tomb #22/23**) and our earlier reviews of the insane art of Myron Fass (**FTT #11**). It is impossible to look at Fass the editor/publisher without accessing the wealth of information and cover scans found on Tom Brinkmann's celebratory *BadMags* website *("Myron Fass - Demon God of Pulp,"* in particular). It runs over several pages and has numerous images of Myron Fass, his late son, David, Al Goldstein (publisher and one-time employee), editor-in-chief, Jeff Goodman and others. There is room for other *"bad-mags"* publishers too. I am grateful for original information found there, which often acted as a springboard for further finds made here. I am one of many fans who are looking forward to the forthcoming Brinkmann tome of same name. There is also author Mark Jacobson's chapter *"I, Myron"* from **Teenage Hipster** in the Modern World, *Grove Press,* 2005 (which restages his original article from The Village Voice, 23rd October 1978). This supplies several telling anecdotes about his visit to the Fass offices and a brief encounter with Stanley R. Harris. There is also the brief newspaper article, written by The Wall Street Journal's staff reporter A. Kent MacDonald (*Bam! Pow! Two Captain Marvels Do Battle In Lawsuit Over Use of Name in Comic Books*, 13th November 1968), which covers the disputes over the **Captain Marvel Comics** and **Eye** digest. There is Dean Speir's The Gun Zone website, which recounts his initial attempts to break into these obscure magazines, as a budding writer. He dealt with Fass long-distance but travelled to the NY offices of *Harris Publications*, meeting the publisher himself. Lastly there are numerous publications, legal disputes, plus two New York State tax appeals (see sidebar, in part 2, **FTT 25**) uncovered here that give valuable insights about Myron Fass and his publishing operations. I will indicate these sources as the story progresses.







By Frank Motler

Loony Bird

The last serious bloc of art from Fass appears in the final issues of the failing *Lev Gleason* line, **Black Diamond Western #53-59** (Decembers 1954-5). On the covers and commanding the majority of the interiors, Fass's work adopted a stylish shield motif. It appears wooden, but we should not draw conclusions. Quite the contrary, although un-credited, he was probably the title's art-director. There is also an impressive double page court-room scene in **Crime and Punishment #72**, towards the end the run, plus an **Adventures Into Wonderland #1** back cover (both *Gleason* titles from April 1955) The courtroom scene was prescient, as we shall see. The final issue of **Black Diamond (#60)** lacks his input, leaving Fass to forge paths elsewhere.

Lunatickle *(The Lunatic's Home Companion)* was published on *Fawcett's Whitehouse Publications, Inc* imprint. The proposal coming from Fass, per Brinkmann/badmags. It proved one of many attempts to benefit from *EC's* groundbreaking *Humor In A Jugular Vein.* A former comic book, **MAD** had converted to a 25 cent magazine with issue **#24**, July 1955. **Lunatickle's** premiere, the following February boasted such renowned artists as Joe Kubert, Bob Bean (painted cover), Russ Heath, Mike Ross (Andru and Esposito) and Art Peddy. Fass is credited with the editorship, plus the spot illustrations for *"Nanu,"* a pastiche of a typically torrid Emile Cola (sorry, Zola) romance. Zola's original, *Nana* (part of *Les Rougon-Macquart)* had been adapted for a movie in 1955, hence its skewed appearance here. Fass also illustrated the one-page *"Birth of the Loony Bird,"* which featured as the cover's mascot. The second and final issue (April 1956) contained no recognisable input from Myron, when the editorship fell to Joe Archibald. Lee Elias supplied the painted cover, whilst Bob Powell and Mike Sekowsky were added to the considerable art line-up.

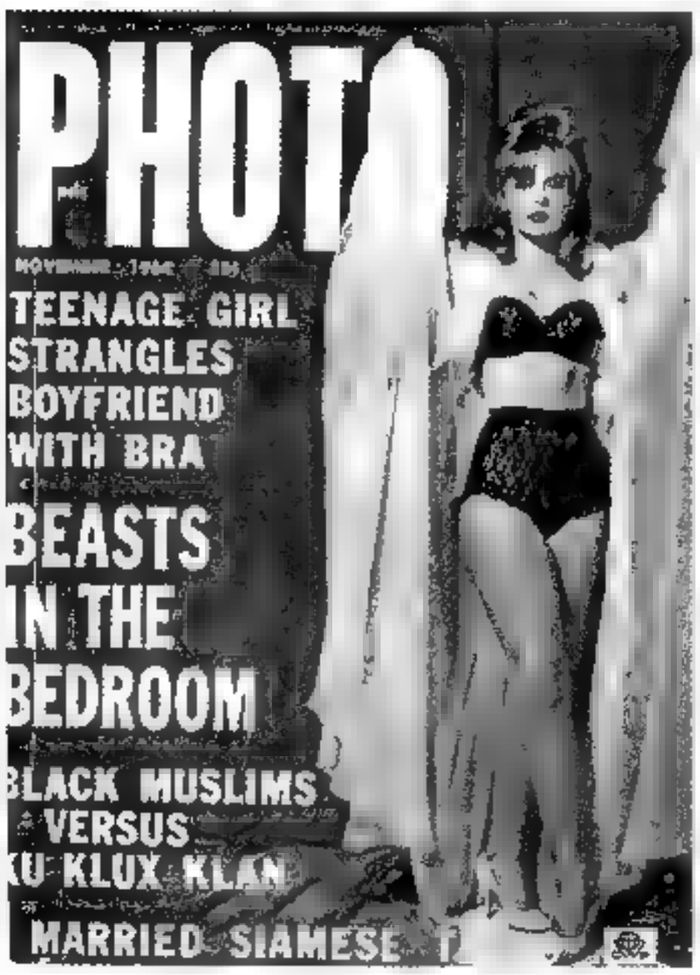
Short-Arse

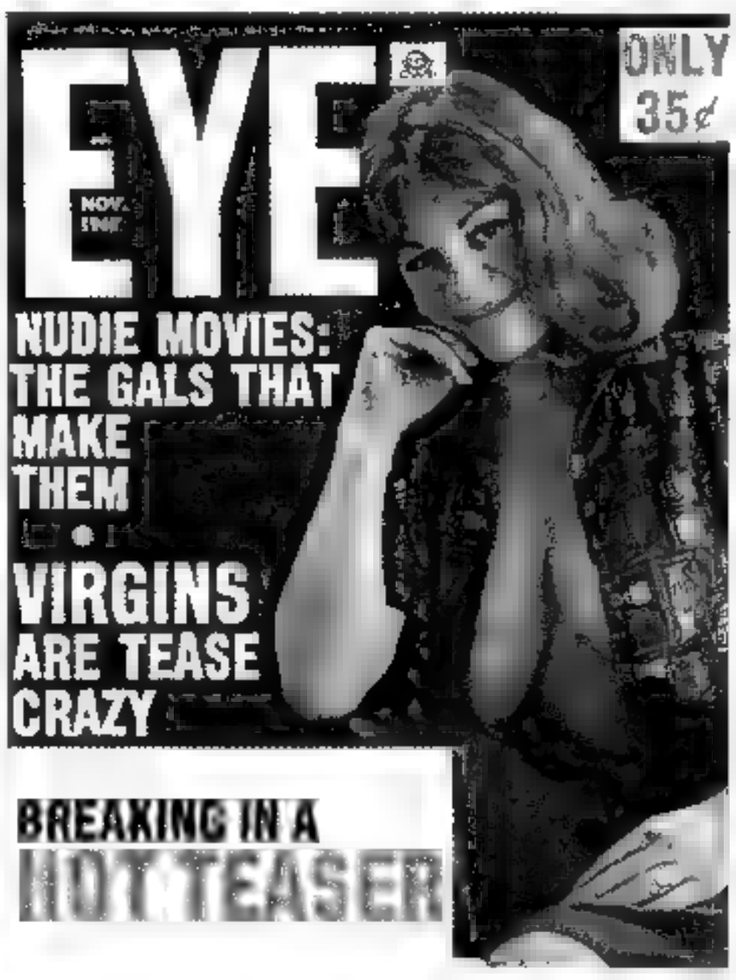
In the latter part of 1956, Fass took over the editorship of **Foto-Rama**, an otherwise undistinguished cheesecake digest. For the un-initiated, cheesecake was a slightly derogatory term applied to attractive, scantily clad females as used in magazines, via photographs or illustrations They were often seen in daft or improbable poses, allowing as much exposure of skin as the censor might permit. This was often a delicate balancing act, as publishers found to their cost on occasion. The term should not to be confused with the sweet, highly edible tart of the same name. **Foto-Rama**, was published by *Arena Publishing Corp* (**vol.1 #1** dated January, 1953), and is the only title known from this company It continued until 1968 at least. The contents of a typical issue (**v6#11**, April 1960), under Fass's stewardship included: *Is Johnny Ray Really A Joy Boy, Why Men Fail Their Wives, Beatniks - Intellectuals or Bums?, What Girls Can Do With A Football, Was Brando a Lousy Hubby?, Jenny Prefers Horses* and *Who Kidnapped Mario Lanza's Kids*. Lanza and Ray were popular singers of the 1950s.

The digest format (approximately 5½ x 7½" or 140 x 220mm) was popular with many publishers and all were cheesy, cheery and gossipy. Following his editorship of **Foto-Rama**, Fass's *Tempest Publications* added **Eye, Pic, Photo** and **Quick** into the mix. **Pic** had various incarnations, as far back as the 1930s, with the Fass series from December 1963. Launched in September 1964, **Quick** *"The Original Newspaper Magazine"* had antecedents in 1949 and 1953. Pint-sized companion, **Photo** (**#1**, July 1964) had been a Martin Goodman digest during 1952-56, as had **Eye** (as: **Eye, People and Pictures**, large froamt from 1949-52) with a brief series from Goodman related *Humorama, Inc* in 1960. The Fass **Eye** debuted in September 1966 and was followed in March 1968, by a *Hearst Corporation* large format magazine (10½ x 13½", 270 x 390mm) of same name. This is best known for the **Spider-Man** mini-comic found attached to the February 1969 (**v2#2**) edition. Referring to the duplication, reporter MacDonald stated, *"Name squabbles aren't novel to Mr. Fass. Last month, he threatened legal action against Hearst Corp. for naming a teenage magazine Eye. Mr. Fass said he owned that name for his two-year-old cheesecake magazine called Eye. He settled the matter by selling the rights to* **Eye** *to Hearst, and renaming his magazine Bold."* In the internecine world of popular publishing, **Bold** had also been used during 1954-61, by the Atlanta, Georgia based *Pocket Magazines/ Sports Report, Inc.* The Fass versions of these increasingly lurid dwarves continued into the early 1970s and were joined by briefly by **Companion**, twice truncated from the **Ladies Home Companion** magazine.

True Problems

Another formative Fass title was **Ogle**, which had two incarnations. The earliest were the March and July 1957 editions (**v1#1** and **#2**), subtitled *Girls With A Giggle*. It was a inconclusive mix of humour





Just when you thought you had every comic you could ever want, here comes a heap of "bad mags". From left to right, Close Encounters of the Fourth Kind Vol 5 #1 (April 1978), Welcome Back Beatles from 1979 (poor Gene Simmons he'll never live it down), the strangely painted cover to Photo (November 1964) and finally more sleazy exploitation from Eye cover dated No-

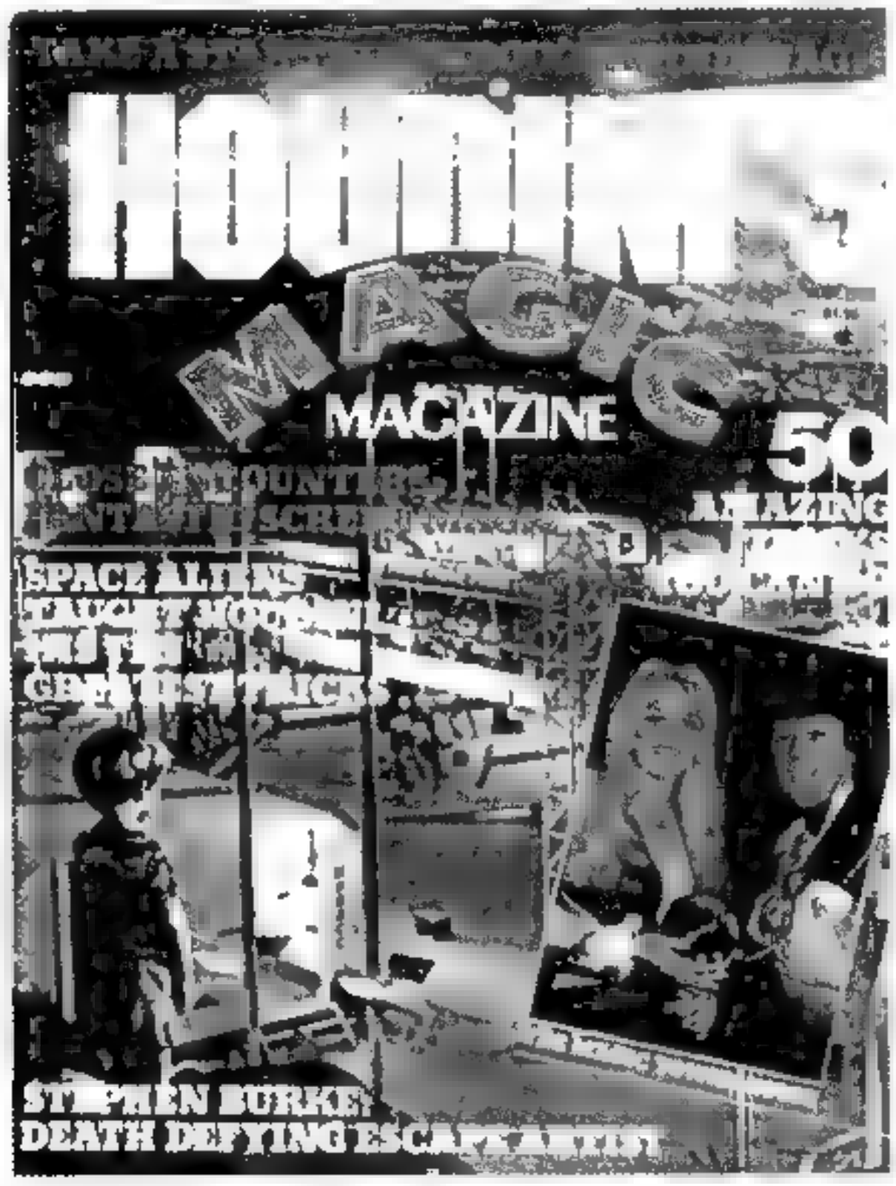
and minor female nudity, published by *True Problems Publications, Inc* Fass was listed as editor and publisher, distributed by *Ace News*. (We will cover distribution later.) It was the start of a long flirtation with misleading cover captions; hence *"Jane Russell Gets A Load Off Her Chest"* and *"How To Make Girls In Bottles."* Before we progress, is it fanciful to think that might be Myron himself on the cover of the July edition? The imprint also generated his earliest known publication, **True Problems v1#1**, June 1956 *(PDC* distribution). This was a mix of texts and illustrations, styled on another *EC* innovation, the *Picto-Fiction* titles of 1955-6. It boasted a standout story from Alvin C. Hollingsworth *("Girl on the Loose,"* 7 pages). Fass is photographed inside, as part of the editorial team. Other members of the quartet were Harry Matetsky, art director; with the females Pat Kahn and Frances Rubin taking assistant editor and production credits. Kahn and Rubin would also work on **Ogle**, with Mike Christopher filling the art director's slot. The promised second issue never materialised; a conflict with the long-running *Harvey* comic, **True Love Problems and Advice** (1951-7) possibly? Or, as at *EC*, the format failed to find an audience.

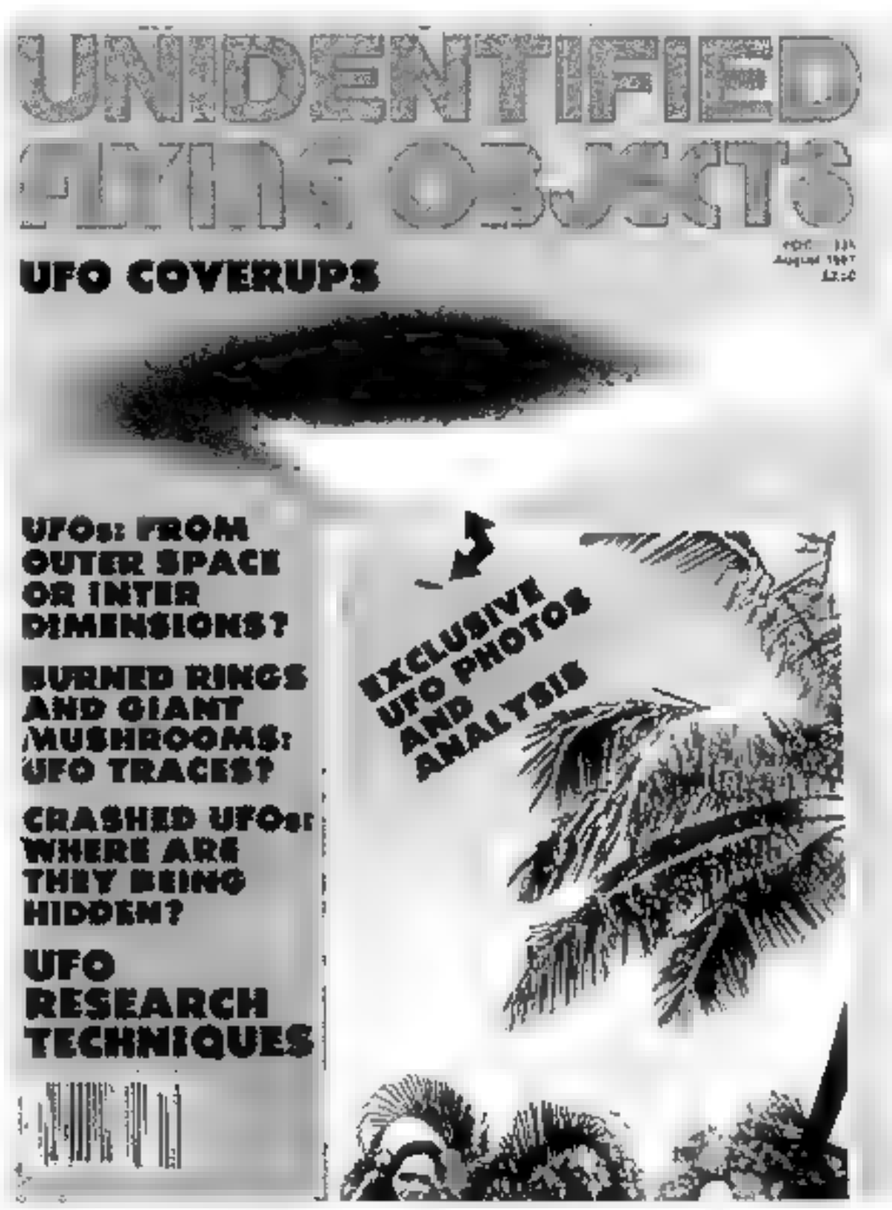
The above trio are the only known titles from *True Problems Publications, Inc*, using 225 Varick Street, New York 14 address. This may be where produced, rather than the editorial team's locale, as it was quoted by several printing companies. Other publisher imprints from Fass and Harris are: *Beauty Secrets Inc; CFV Publishers* (Myron Fass, c1987), *Country-Wide, Inc; Command Publications, Inc* (Harris), *Country Wide Publications, Inc* (also: **Countrywide Publications, Inc), Countrywide Communications Inc* (also: *Comm, Inc), Eerie Publications, Inc, *Equine Enterprises, Inc; *Fass Publications, Inc.; *General Newstand Publishing Corp , *Great American Magazines, Inc.; Harris Publications,Inc; Horizon Publications, Inc* (Irving Fass, 1986-7); *Jaguar Publications, Inc; *Jock, Inc; Ladies Coronet, Inc; Libery Comunications, Inc *M.F. Enterprises, Inc; Modern Day Periodicals, Inc; *Modern Sports, Inc; National Mirror, Inc; National Newspaper Publications, Inc; *National Newsstand Publishing Corp., *Newstand Media Publishing Corp, *Readington Farms, Inc; Reliance Productions* (suspected), *Reliance Publications, Inc; S.J. Publications, Inc; Sophisticated Publications, Inc; Stanhope Communications* (Harris), **Stories, Layouts and Press, Inc* (also: *Layout); Tempest Publications Incorporated, *U.S. Publishing, Inc; Victory Publications, Inc; Violent World, Inc, Windsor Communications* (Myron Fass, c1983) and *World Famous Periodicals.* (Note/ companies marked with a star (*) were named directly in Quad/Graphics v. Fass law-suit, to be discussed in **FTT#25.**) **Ogle** returned *For Your Entertainment* and three further editions (**v1#4, v2#5** and **v2#6,** August and October 1960, January 1961; *M.F. Enterprises).* There is no known third (#3) edition at this time

"The Eerie Years"

The *Eerie Publications* titles from 1966 and beyond are covered by our guest writer, Gene M. Broxson. He has revealed, the first five editions of **Weird (v1#10 to v2#2,** 1966-7) were published by Robert Farrell, not Fass. The publishing address (315 West 70th Street, NYC) was unknown here and interesting to learn about. Irving Fass is listed as art director, therefore I suspect Myron was pulling strings behind the scenes. The second phase company would be Fass controlled, as 150 Fifth Avenue, NYC address (Broxson) was used severally by him. Publisher, Mel Lenny (Broxson) is thought to be Mel Lenowitz, a long time Fass associate (Brinkmann). The third phase company has Fass listed in the credits. I can confirm some details about the **Tales From The Crypt v1#10** one-shot. It is dated July 1968, using the second phase address, with typical Iger studios contents. Mel Lenny is listed as publisher, edited by Carl Burgos, with Irving Fass, art director. Finally, *Overstreet* records a **Tales of Terror** issue from 1964. If it exists, it would certainly be the earliest *Farrell/ Fass* horror magazine. However, only *Charlton's* digest **Tales of Terror From Beyond** (summer 1964, which reuses the cover from the in-house *Monarch* paperback, **MB264,** 1962) has ever been recorded.

Nonetheless, there are two *Eerie Publications* one-shots not covered by Gene: **Dracula Classic** and **Revenge of Dracula** (1976 and winter 1977). Also of interest are: **Frankenstein Classic** *(Modern Day,* February 1977) and **Screen Monsters** *(S.J. Publications,* spring 1981). All are similar, interposing texts with old b&w photographs



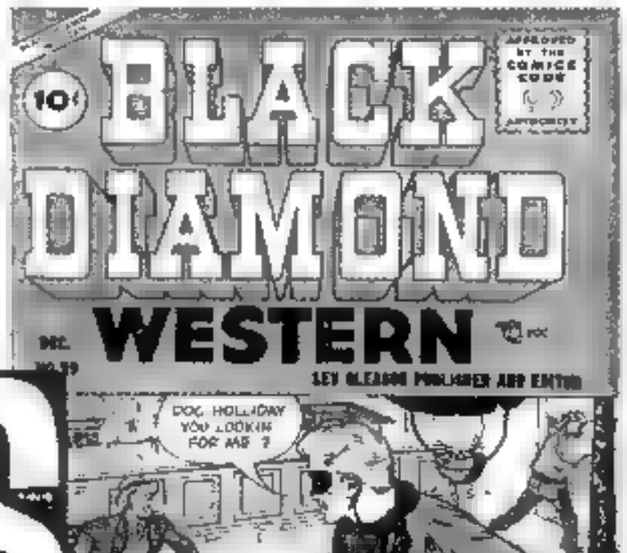

UNIDENTIFIED
FLYING OBJECTS
UFO COVERUPS
UFOs: FROM OUTER SPACE OR INTER DIMENSIONS?
BURNED RINGS AND GIANT MUSHROOMS: UFO TRACES?
CRASHED UFOs: WHERE ARE THEY BEING HIDDEN?
UFO RESEARCH TECHNIQUES
EXCLUSIVE UFO PHOTOS AND ANALYSIS

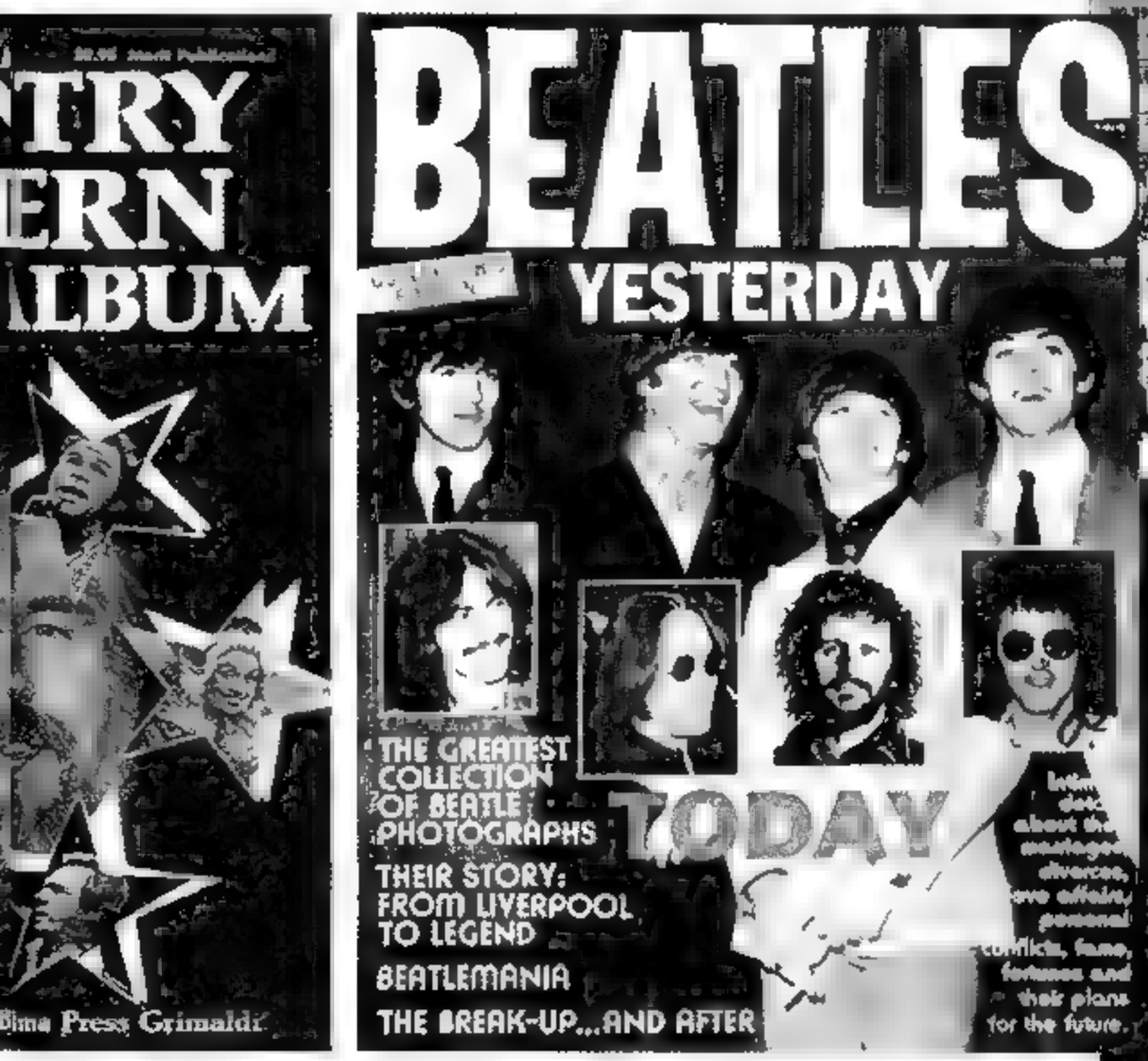
of the classic Universal movie monsters, under Lugosi or Karloff covers. **Sea Monsters** (1976-7, *Countrywide)* produced two issues featuring painted covers and sought to tempt readers with *Maneating Killers of the Deep, The Truth About The Loch Ness Monster* or *Water Dwelling Monsters of North America.* **Kong** *"The Most Famous Monster of All Time"* (1976, *Countrywide Communications)* featured a stunning painted cover, hoping to benefit from the *King Kong* remake, starring Jeff Bridges and Jessica Lange, whilst revisiting the Ray Harryhausen/Willis O'Brien classic of 1933. Derived from Steven Spielberg's 1975 hit movie, the exploitative **Jaws Of Blood,** *(Jaws of Horror Spectacular, fall 1978),* **Jaws of Death** *(The Nightmare of Being Eaten Alive)* and **Jaws of Horror** titles create a disturbing sense of unease. The epitome was the summer 1978 issue of **Jaws of Horror (v4#2),** where a terrified girl appears inside a shark's bloody maw. The cover appetiser, *"Blood Lust: Screaming Infants Swallowed Whole!!"*

Shock and Awe..

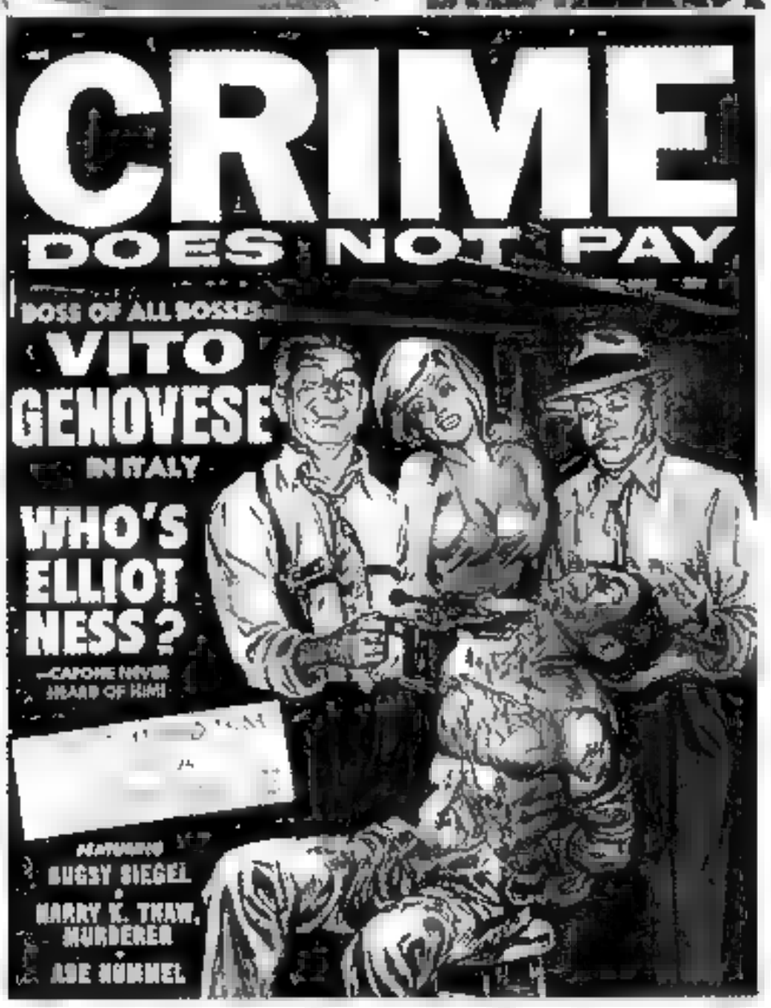
Fass dabbled obliquely in the burgeoning monster magazine market (**Famous Monsters of Filmland #1** launched 1958) Initially, with the 1959 one-shot **Shock Tales (v1#1,** *M.F. Enterprises),* followed in 1962 by the three issue **Thriller** *(Tempest Publications).* However, am I seeing things again, or is that insane Myron portraying the hanged man for the premiere? Come to think of it, didn't Fass illustrate *"Husband Be Hanged"* as one of several stories, for the underrated **Hollywood Love Doctor**? (FTT #11). Brinkmann identifies other examples of Fass appearing on or in his magazines, including **Official UFO v3#8** October 1978. I digress. Now we come to a couple of puzzles. There are some who claim the **3-D Monster** one-shot *(Fair Publishing Ltd,* 1964) as Fass. Although not publicity shy, a perusal reveals no mention of Fass or any of his publications. The 4 West 40th Street, NYC address is not a known location either. If this proves a Fass title, then consideration should be given to the 1964 **Beatlemania** one-shot from SMP Publishing Ltd, quoting the same address.

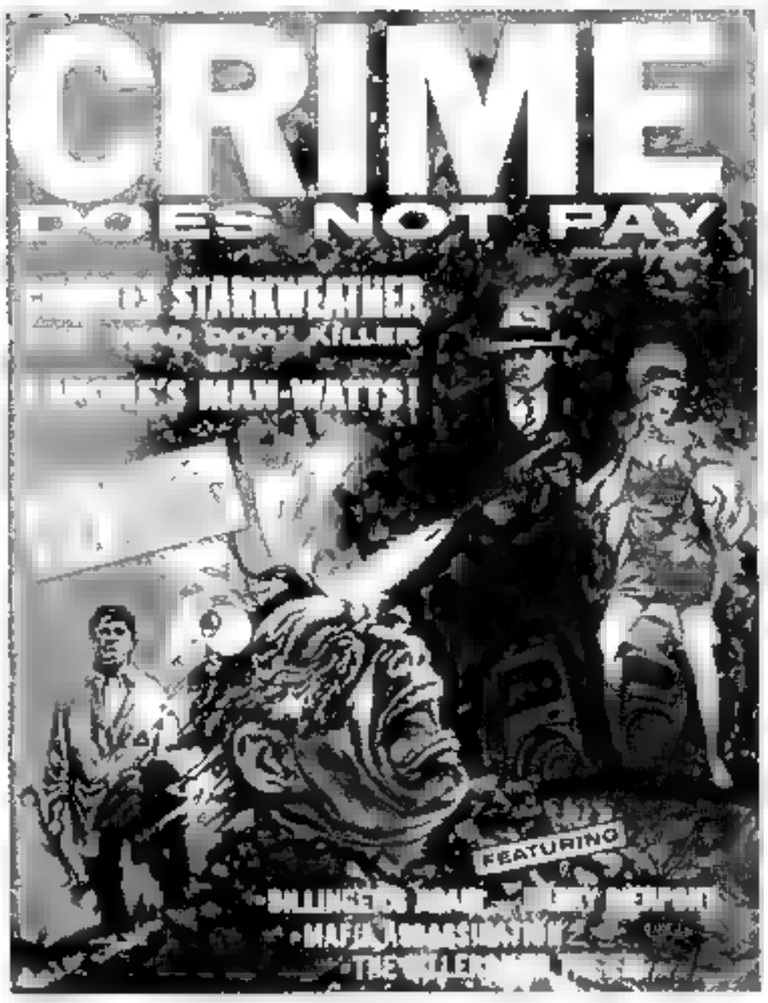
HOLD ON THERE BEN YOU'RE NO RIGHT TO PUT THE LAW INTO YOUR OWN HANDS! IF YOU TRY TO TAKE YOUR BROTHER'S KILLER THE LAW WILL BE ON HIS SIDE! AND I'LL HAVE TO MAKE IT STICK.
SHERIFF
DODGE CITY KANSAS. THE TIME: NOON. AND DODGE CITY SLEEPS IN SWELTERING
VENGEANCE!

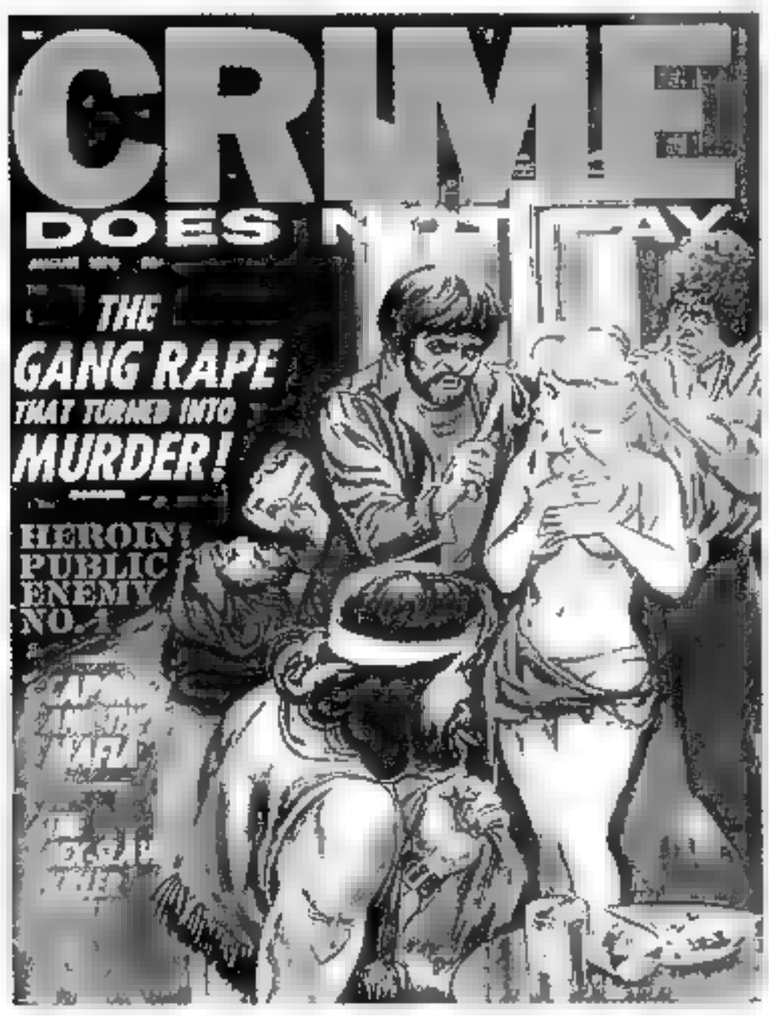




From the top: Myron's art from Black Diamond Western #57 1955, followed by his cover to Black Diamond Western # 59 December 1955 and Cycle Illustrated Vol 3 #10 (August 1970). Left to right: Houdini's Magic Vol 2 #2 (March 1978) Unidentified Flying Objects Vol 1 #1 (August 1981, the cover was originally used in 1977), Country Western Photo Album 1979, Beatles Yesterday Today 1975,



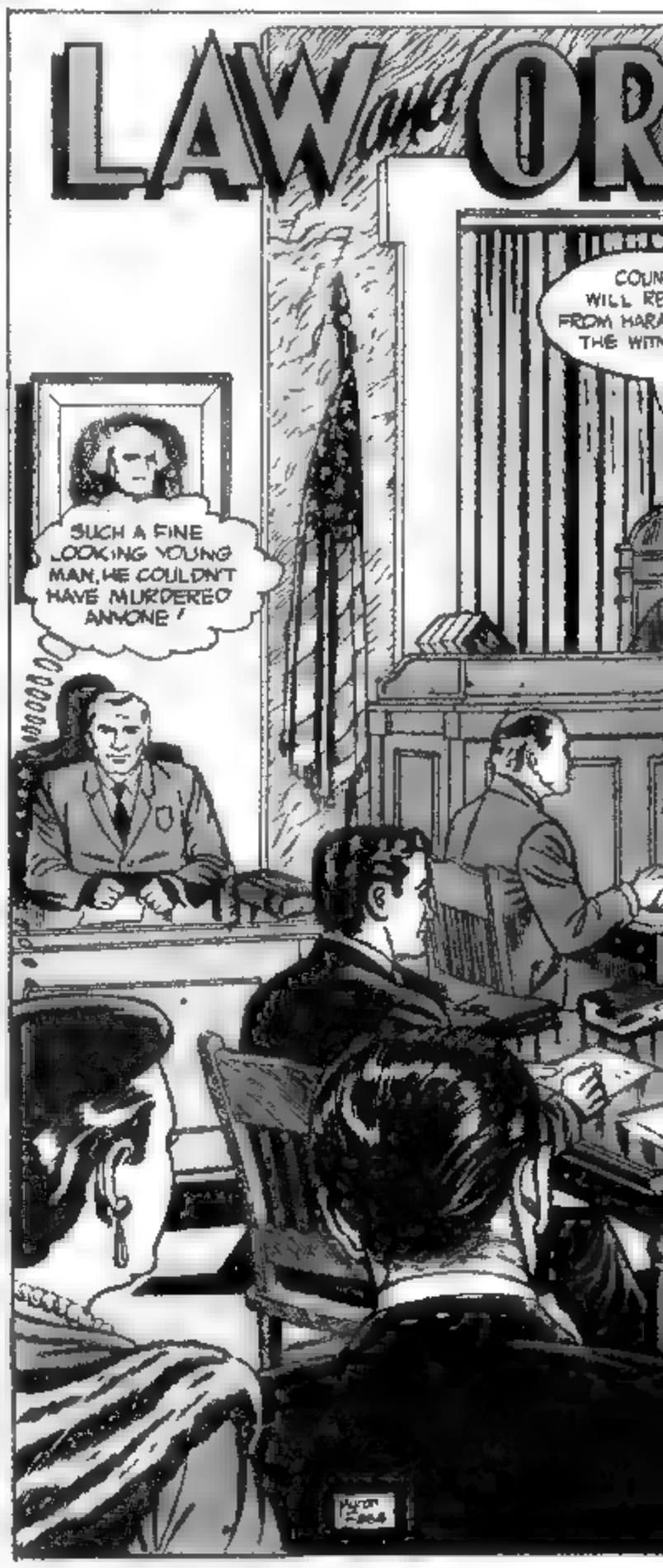




Another puzzle is the little seen **Suspense v1#4** (September 1959, *Suspense Publications, Inc)* which relates to the monster boom. Although the fourth edition, no antecedents have been discovered. It is published from a suspected Robert Farrell/ Allen Hardy address (342 Madison Ave, NYC) with publisher and editor listed as George S. Loudon and Christopher Plumberton, respectively. Mel Golden and Lee Hagler are recorded as managing editor and art director.

Farrell had dabbled with Suspense beforehand. There is a four issue digest and a three issue **Suspense Novel**, all produced during 1951. The magazine may have been the belated fourth issue of the latter. However it is likely this one-shot was packaged by Fass along with the formative issues of **Weird (v1#10 to v2#1)** 1966-7 (see **FTT#24**). The **Suspense** cover features the same terrified girl as used on **Thriller #1.** This time, "Myron" is portraying the zombie. The duo are seen inside the former (page 28), reworking the hanged-man scenario. The girl appears inside **Thriller #2** again, in a small b&w photo (page 27). It leads to the wild surmise that **Suspense** is the misdated fourth issue of **Thriller**? At the least, several of the photos were shot at the same session. Whatever, the editorial team for **Thriller** is: Myron Fass (publisher), Harry Schreiner (editorial director), Irving Fass (art director), Laura Caruthers (art editor), Mel Lenny (advertising) and Maximus Leonides (production director). Again, the address is unfamiliar, 2 West 45th Street, NYC and would prove one of several Fass publications printed in Canada. Sample stories from the premiere include *"The Vampire Was a Sucker!", "Fiend of the Future!", "The Werewolf Lover", "Bored to Death", "Dream-Time, Scream-Time"* and *"The Secret Horror of Mr. Hyde."*

As suggested above, **Shock Tales, Suspense** and **Thriller** are not true monster magazines in that they ape the style with photo props, rather than original stills from the famous monster movies of yore.As such, they are extremely interesting and **FTT** readers may wish to acquire one or two

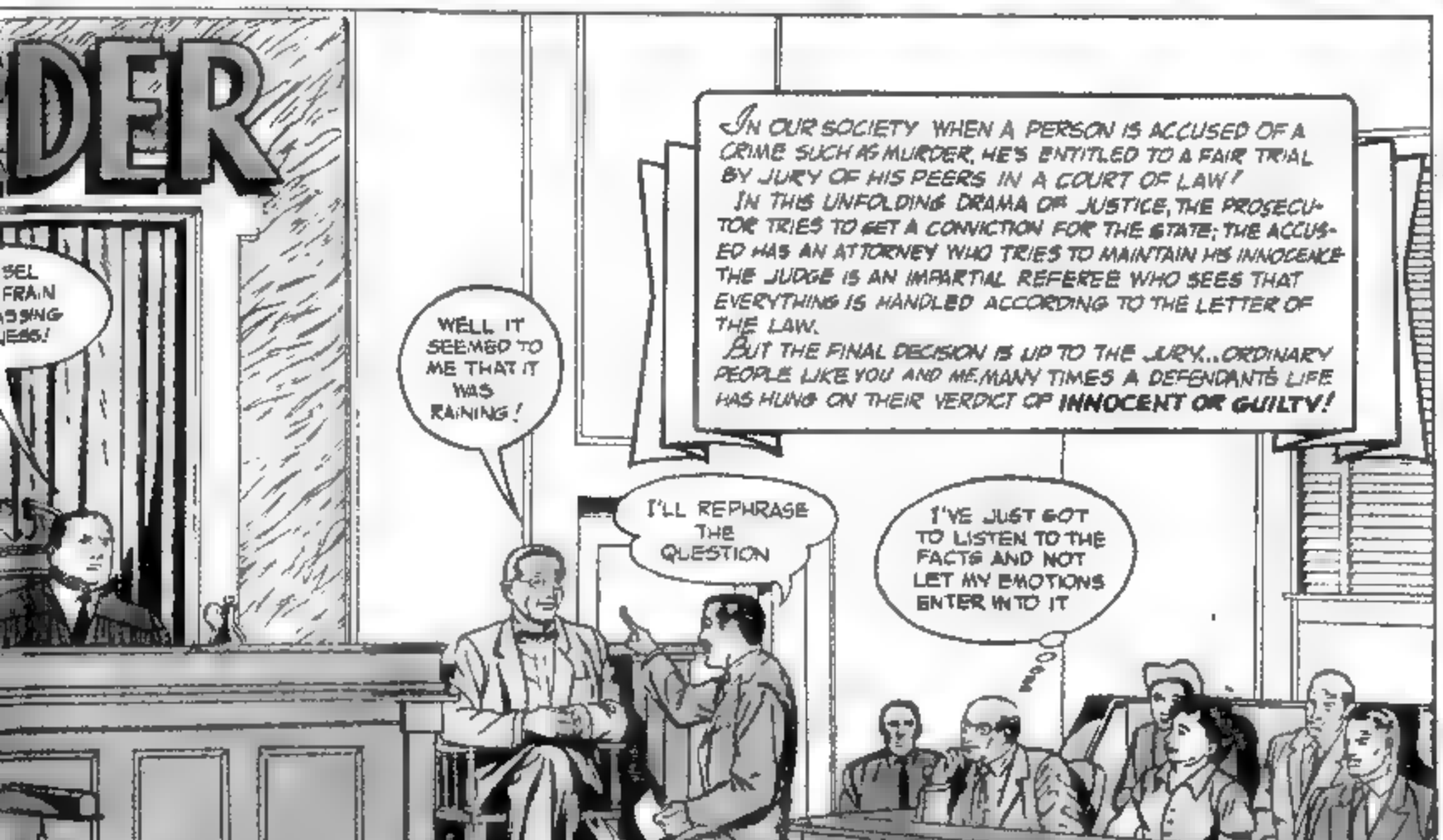


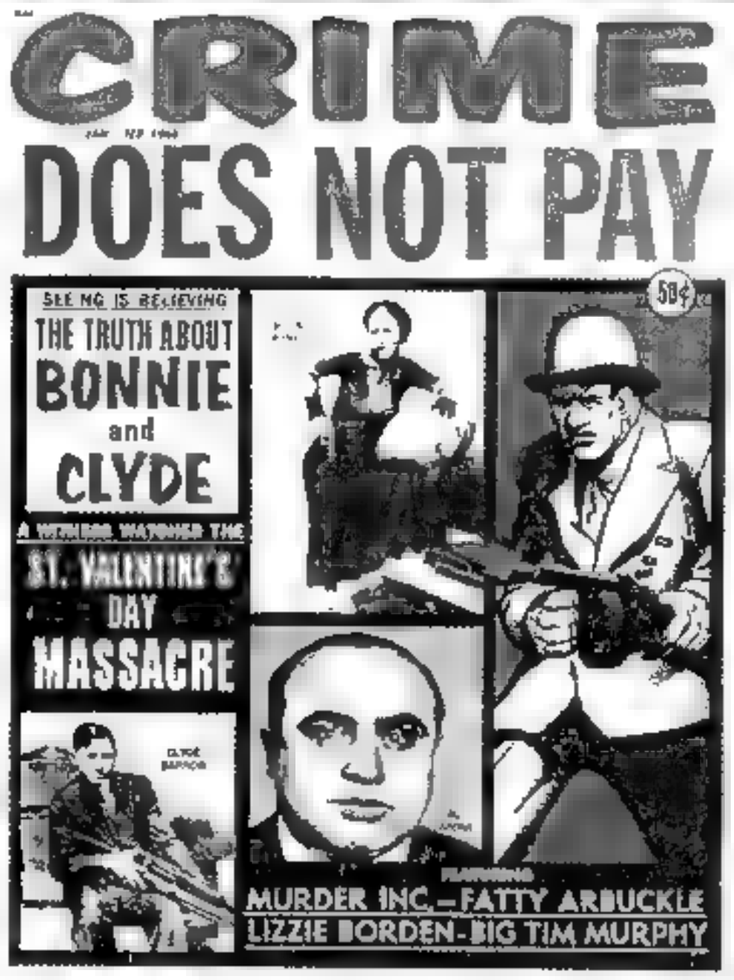
Leave it to Beaver

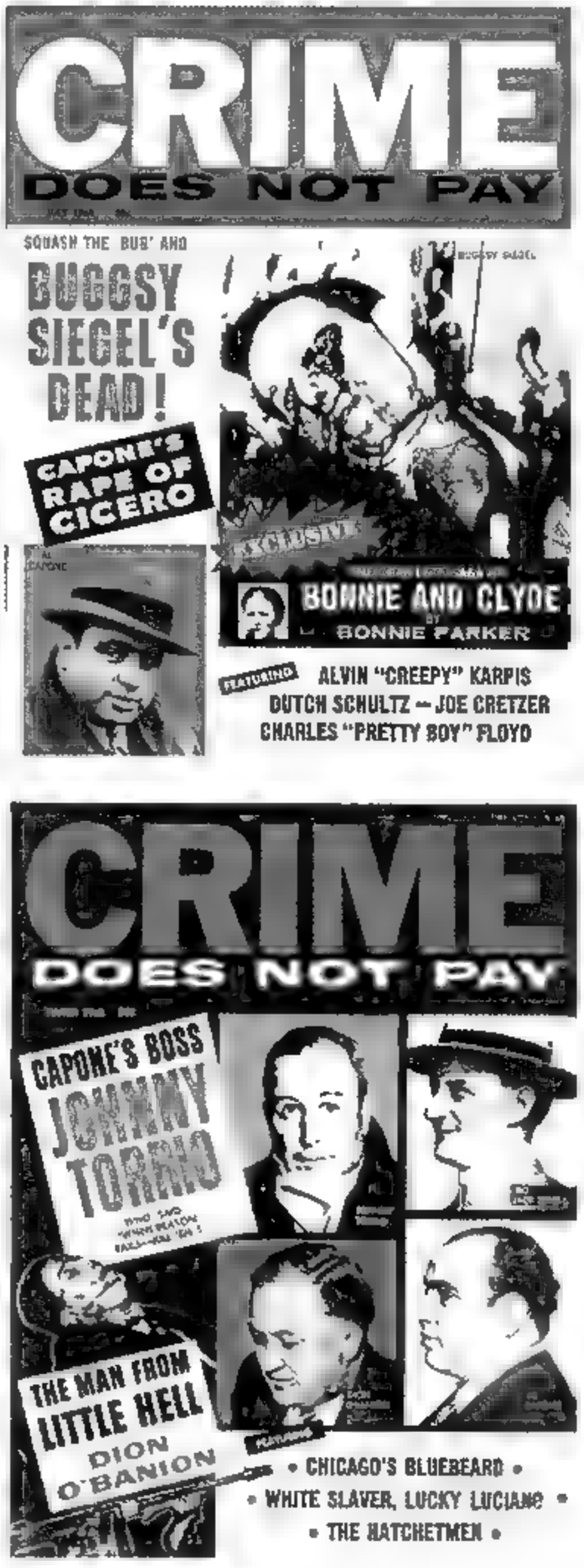
Adult (female nude) magazines had been a lucrative sideline for American publishers, since the early 1900s. Hugh M. Hefner's **Playboy** had debuted in 1953, with a minimum of nudity and was given national distribution courtesy *Independent News*. It paved the way for a host of imitations. From Fass, came **Jaguar (v1#1,** January 1964) under a new imprint *Jaguar Publications, Inc.* Seeking to emulate **Playboy's** popular *Little Annie Fanny* comic strip (by Kurtzman and Elder), *Jaguar Bond "Agent 0069, The Man From Orgy"* appeared on the covers and insides of several issues. **Jaguar** was followed by a host of other skin mags, including **Best of Flick, Brut/Brute, Buccaneer, Erotica, Duke, Femmes, Foxy Confessions, He and She, Jock, Stud, Twosome** and **FLICK.** The latter's all-capital masthead could be mistaken for a sexual euphemism, if glanced at quickly. Fass's **Poorboy** (1968-9, *Tempest)* was one of several magazine that pastiched the brand-leader, **Playboy**. The digests should also be included, as they became overtly sleazy in later years, plus **Gasm** and **Rump,** which proffered sexually explicit comic strips. In the 1970s, Fass supplemented his ranges with **Confidential Sex Report, Groupie Rock, True Sex Crimes** and **Vice Squad Detective.**

Comicscope

Myron Fass was one of several publisher tempted back into comics in 1966. All were encouraged by the 68-page giant, 25c format. From *MF Enterprises* came the ill-famed **Captain Marvel** and **Captain Marvel Presents The Terrible 5.** The concept came from Carl Burgos, heavily involved in the Fass horror magazines Compatriot, *Countrywide Publications* released the lesser known **Henry Brewster** an undistinguished teen humour comic, enlivened considerably by Bob Powell's artistry.

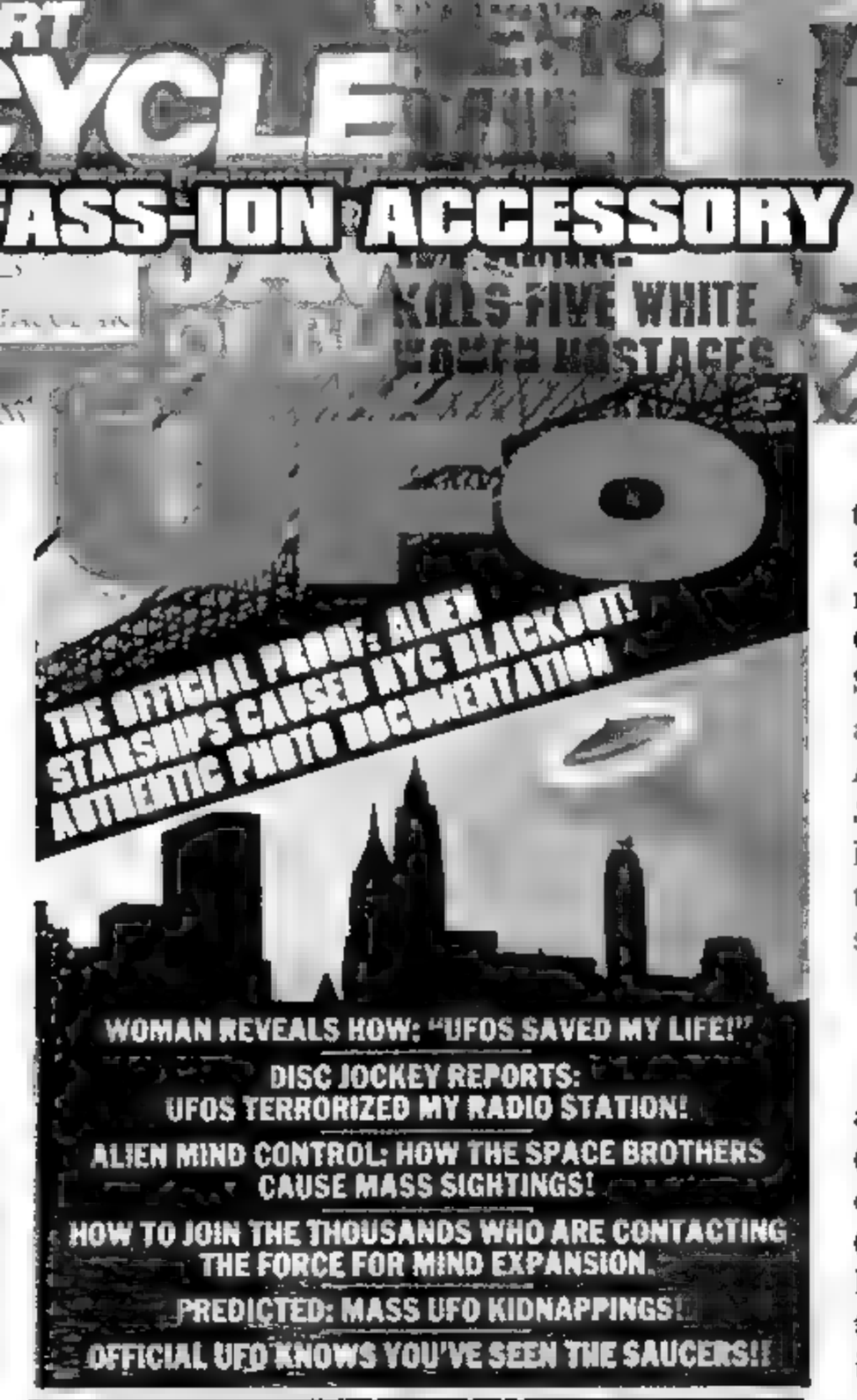

DER
WELL IT SEEMED TO ME THAT IT WAS RAINING!
I'LL REPHRASE THE QUESTION
I'VE JUST GOT TO LISTEN TO THE FACTS AND NOT LET MY EMOTIONS ENTER INTO IT
I HEAR THE STATE HAS AN EYE-WITNESS!
IN OUR SOCIETY WHEN A PERSON IS ACCUSED OF A CRIME SUCH AS MURDER, HE'S ENTITLED TO A FAIR TRIAL BY JURY OF HIS PEERS IN A COURT OF LAW!
IN THIS UNFOLDING DRAMA OF JUSTICE, THE PROSECUTOR TRIES TO GET A CONVICTION FOR THE STATE; THE ACCUSED HAS AN ATTORNEY WHO TRIES TO MAINTAIN HIS INNOCENCE THE JUDGE IS AN IMPARTIAL REFEREE WHO SEES THAT EVERYTHING IS HANDLED ACCORDING TO THE LETTER OF THE LAW.
BUT THE FINAL DECISION IS UP TO THE JURY...ORDINARY PEOPLE LIKE YOU AND ME.MANY TIMES A DEFENDANTS LIFE HAS HUNG ON THEIR VERDICT OF INNOCENT OR GUILTY!


CRIME DOES NOT PAY
SEEING IS BELIEVING
THE TRUTH ABOUT BONNIE and CLYDE
ST. VALENTINE'S DAY MASSACRE
MURDER INC.—FATTY ARBUCKLE
LIZZIE BORDEN-BIG TIM MURPHY


CRIME DOES NOT PAY
SQUASH THE BUG! AND
BUGSY SIEGEL'S DEAD!
CAPONE'S RAPE OF CICERO
EXCLUSIVE!
BONNIE AND CLYDE BY BONNIE PARKER
FEATURING ALVIN "CREEPY" KARPIS
DUTCH SCHULTZ — JOE CRETZER
CHARLES "PRETTY BOY" FLOYD
CRIME DOES NOT PAY
CAPONE'S BOSS JOHNNY TORRIO
THE MAN FROM LITTLE HELL
DION O'BANION
• CHICAGO'S BLUEBEARD •
• WHITE SLAVER, LUCKY LUCIANO •
• THE HATCHETMEN •

The former Big Cheese was thought to be in the public domain, as were the villains, Plastic Man and The Bat. *DC* would soon be correcting those assumptions, such that Plas was dropped, whilst The Bat was changed to The Ray. The use of *Captain Marvel* would embroil Fass in controversy again. *"New York— Is this puny planet too small for two Captain Marvels? Myron Fass, publisher of comic books with Captain Marvel as "super hero," thinks so. He's suing Martin Goodman, who just launched another line of Captain Marvel comics. Though the two Marvels have little in common except name, their coexistence on newsstands confuses dealers and readers, Mr. Fass contends"* (MacDonald). (Martin Goodman was the publisher of *Marvel Comics*) In any event, the novel format failed to generate sales and was abandoned by all debutante comic book publishers the following year, Fass included. Dotted throughout these comics, were adverts for *Comicscope* ($1.00 +.25c postage) and similar looking *Batman Color Projector* ($1.98, including a 100 Batman Super Hero Pictures). The former had been advertised in comics since the 1940s, whilst the 1966-8 TV series (starring Adam West) had made **Batman** extremely popular. These projectors were being sold from Fass's offices or his New Jersey home address (191 Middlesex Avenue, Englewood Cliffs). Also displayed, were plugs for two short-lived Anglo-centric Fass magazines, **Teen Circle** and **Teen Trends** (1965-6). These adopted a busy mix of b&w photos, jazzy coloured line art and captions *(The Beatles Speak Their Minds About Your Problems, The Beach Boys Speak Out, The Rolling Stones - How They Gather Fame, Riches and Fun Without Even Trying)*

One misnomer, is **Great West** *(M.F. Enterprises),* which *Overstreet* has listed for decades. Initially as a comic, latterly as a comic styled magazine, commencing **v1#1**, 1969. It is a magazine, but contains illustrations and text stories (rather than comics), for which first and last known issues here are **v1#11**, June 1967 and **v5#4**, August 1971. All featured painted covers, not dissimilar

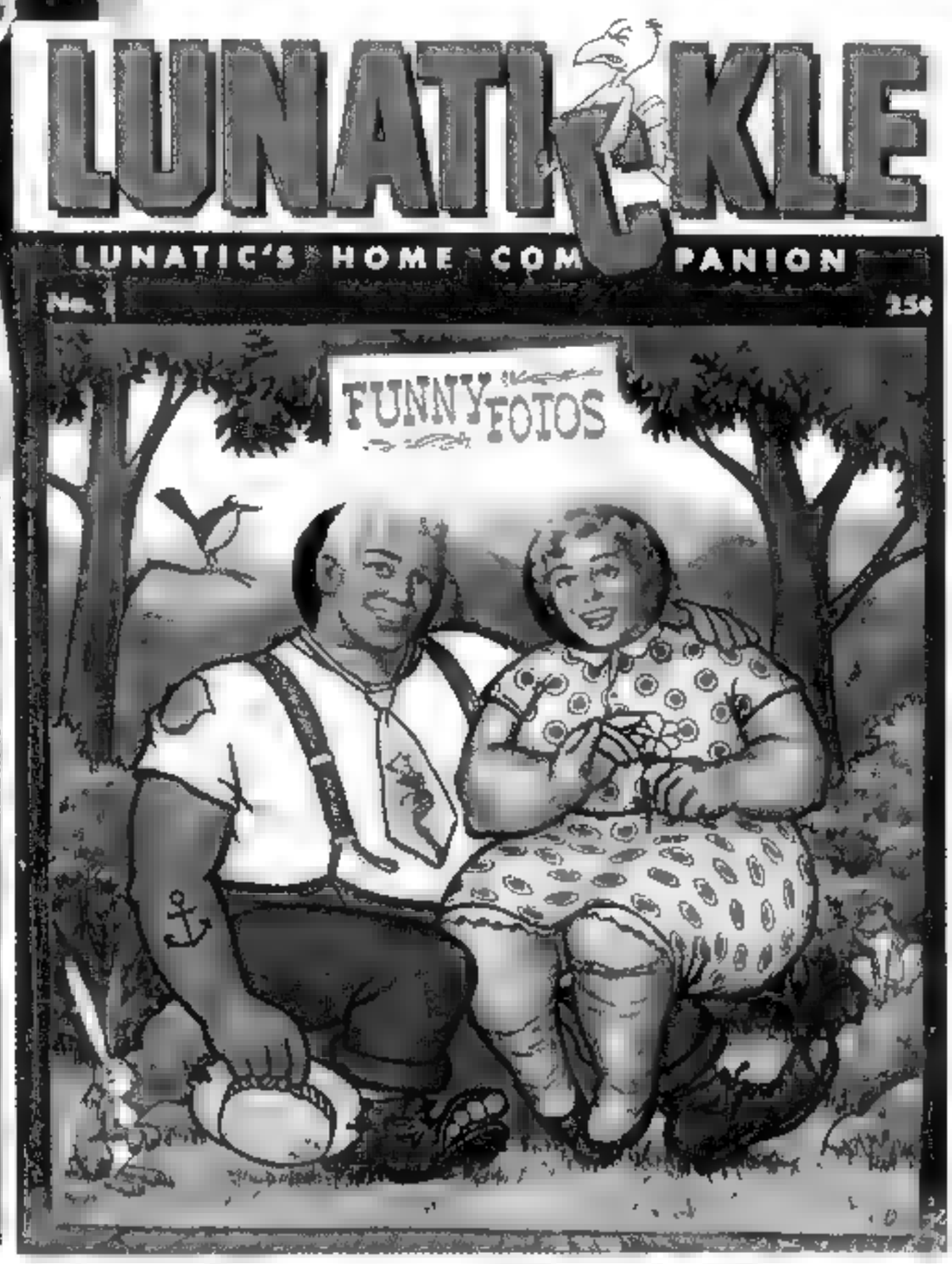

CYCLE
ASS-ION ACCESSORY
KILLS FIVE WHITE
POLICE HOSTAGES
THE OFFICIAL PROOF: ALIEN
STARSHIPS CAUSED NYC BLACKOUT!
AUTHENTIC PHOTO DOCUMENTATION
WOMAN REVEALS HOW: "UFOS SAVED MY LIFE!"
DISC JOCKEY REPORTS:
UFOS TERRORIZED MY RADIO STATION!
ALIEN MIND CONTROL: HOW THE SPACE BROTHERS
CAUSE MASS SIGHTINGS!
HOW TO JOIN THE THOUSANDS WHO ARE CONTACTING
THE FORCE FOR MIND EXPANSION.
PREDICTED: MASS UFO KIDNAPPINGS!
OFFICIAL UFO KNOWS YOU'VE SEEN THE SAUCERS!!

to those on the *Eerie Publications* titles. Whilst there are a couple of violent covers (October and December 1968, v2#5-6), the majority feature typical cowboys and Indians fare. Other magazines with painted covers (selected issues in some cases) include: **Ancient Astronauts, Close Encounters of the Fourth Kind, Crime Does Not Pay** (1969-70), **Sea Monsters, Space Wars, Star Warp, The World of Sherlock Holmes, Gasm, Rump, Murder Tales** and **Tales of the Killers**. The last four were comic book magazines. **Gasm**, *"Spaced Out Illustrated Fantasies"* had its title abbreviated from orgasm. There are five known issues on *Stories, Layouts and Press* imprint. The numbering is sporadic, but the publication dates are November, December 1977; February, April, June 1978. **Rump** *(S.J. Publications)* is thought to be all-reprint from **Gasm**, with issues from summer, fall 1980 and winter 1981. Both are science fiction oriented and have adult content/nudity, with part colour interiors.

Arch Criminal

Tales of the Killers ran for two issues, on *World Famous Periodicals* imprint. The second and finale (v1#11, February 1971) spoofs a *Gleason* **Crime Does Pay** comic book cover (**#47**, 1946). Here, the terrified man being led to the electric chair, is replaced by an equally concerned, but scantily clad good-girl. **Murder Tales** also copied the comic books. The first (**v1#10**) restaged the machine gun assassins executing a snitch in a phone booth (**Crime Does Not Pay #25**), whilst the second (**v1#11**, January 1971) re-enacted the hapless moll being thrown from a moving car (**Crimes By Women #54**, *Fox)* However, this image was swiped in part from **Crime Does Not Pay's #26** cover and has been used elsewhere since. The contents were reprinted from the *Gleason* comics. Fass also published his own version of **Crime Does Not Pay**, as a magazine (1968-70, *M.F. Enterprises)* and as with *Gleason*, supplied a **Crime and Punishment** running mate. I have only been able to find two issues, December 1968 and June 1969. These feature photo montage covers of notorious American gangsters, as with the formative **Crime Does Not Pay**. The later covers were all painted and show a captive man being roasted by a blow-torch, gangsters taking pot-shots at a man, buried up to his neck or a girl about to be raped by a biker gang (**v2 #6**, Sep-69; **v2 #7**, Dec-69 and **v3 #3**, Aug-70).

The most notorious spoof, is a variation on Fredric Wertham's caption *"Children told me what the man was going to do with the red-hot poker"* (**Seduction of the Innocent**, 1954) Originally, it was displayed alongside an interior illustration from **Crime Reporter #2** *(St. John,* 1948). Knowingly, Wertham had allowed the reader to interpret whether the poker is



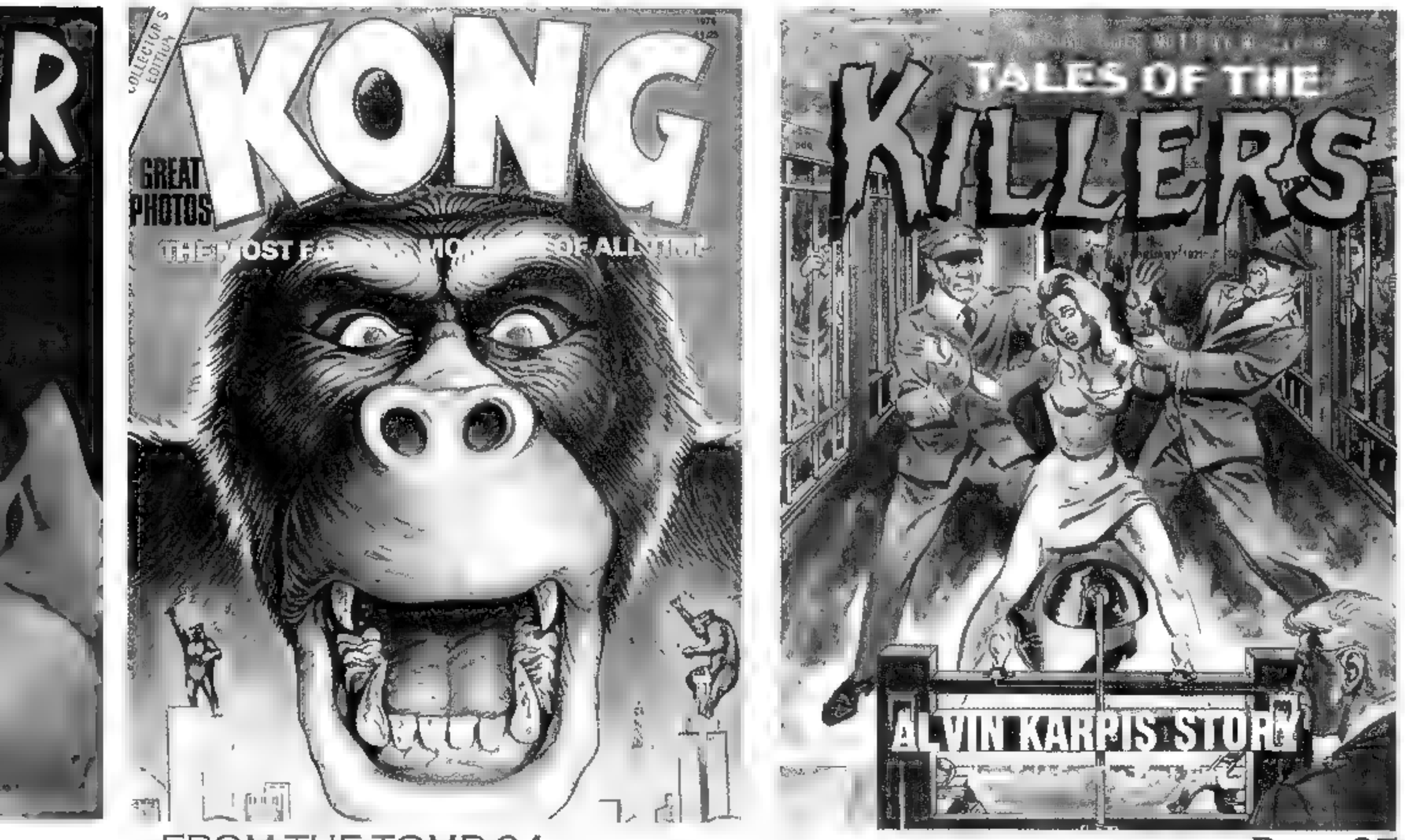
On the previous spread Crime Does Not Pay V 2 #6 (Sept 1969), Vol 2 #7 (Dec 1969), Vol 3 #3 (Aug 70), Vol 1 #10 (Jan 1968), Vol 1 #12 (July 1968), Vol 2 #11 (March 1968) plus Myron's spread from his days with Lev Gleason Crime & Punishment #72 (April 1955). On these pages from the top Official UFO #1, Thriller #1 (Feb 1962) is that a Fass on the cover! Lunaticide #1 (Feb 1956), Thriller #2, Kong (1976) , Tales of the Killers Vol #11 (February 1971).

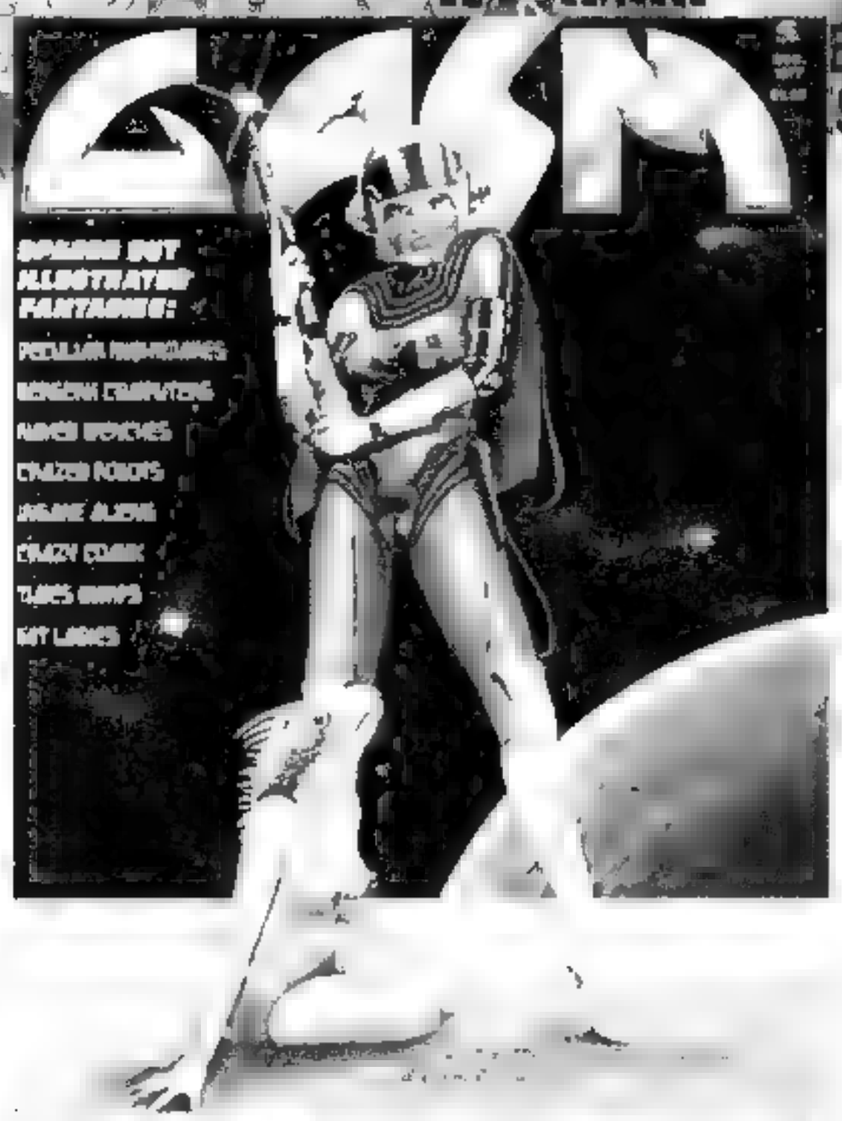
intended for the girl's foot, seen tied and extended, or a far worse violation inside her skirt, now slightly agape. This ambiguity was removed once and for all, in the horrific Fass restaging (**Crime Does Not Pay v3#4**, *M.F. Enterprises,* October 1970, last issue?) The other Fass crime magazines (Brinkmann's researches) are **Chief Of Detectives** *(Insane Murders, LA Strangler* plus a brief series, 1978 and 1980), **Crime, The Godfathers, Homicide Detective** (two brief series), **Homicide Detective's Crime Magazine Extra - Son of Sam Caught!, Mobs and Their Gangs/Mobs and Gangs, Murder Squad Detective, Murder Tales, True Sex Crimes, Vice Squad Detective, Violent World** and more genteel, **The World of Sherlock Holmes Mystery Magazine**. Of these, **Homicide Detective** had been a brief series from *Sterling Magazines* in the 1950s, whilst *Natlus, Inc* (Charles Sulton) published **Vice Squad** magazine in 1960s, preceded by a one-shot pulp magazine c 1935 *(Graphic Arts, Inc/Fawcett).*

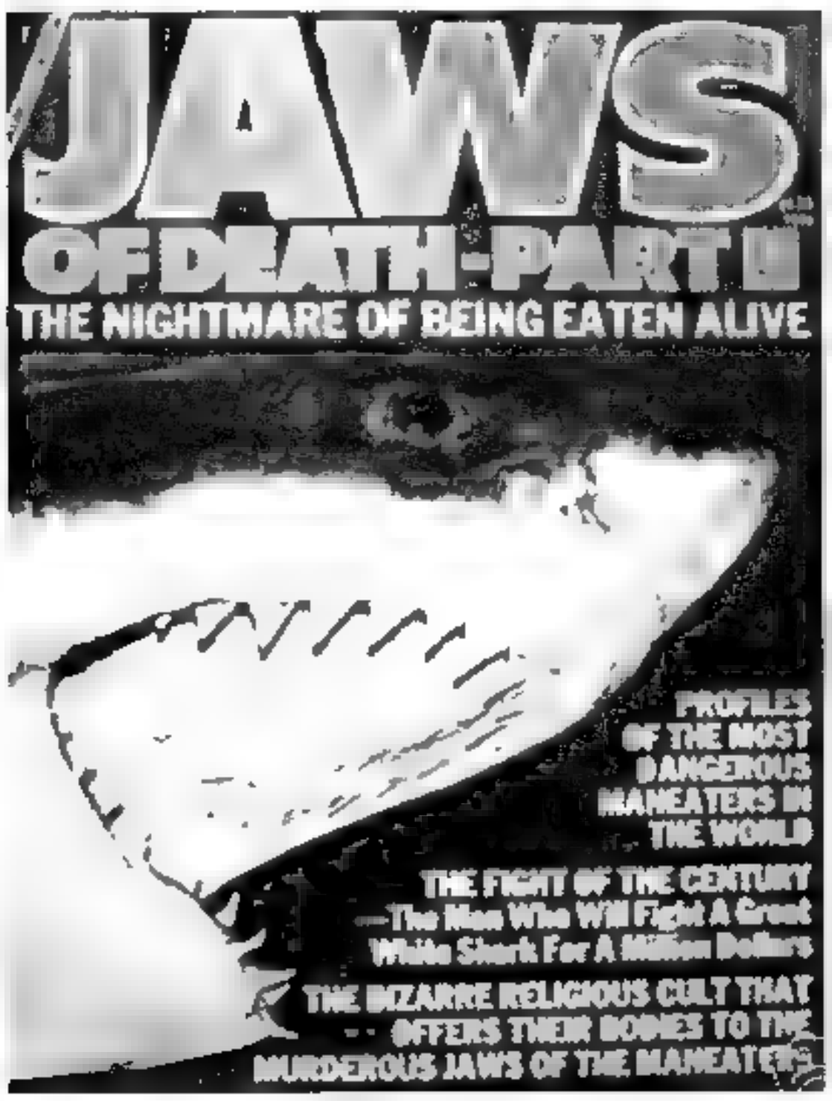
Camelot

The death of President Kennedy from a sniper's bullet (November 22, 1963) generated a huge outpouring of national grief in America. It also produced a host of periodicals devoted to the Kennedy family and "Camelot" era. Over the years, *Countrywide Publications* released **Jacqueline Kennedy Her Personal Photos, v1#1** (1964), **JFK's Love Affairs** (1974) and **John We Remember You** *(The Life and Times of John Fitzgerald Kennedy,* 1974). The May 1964, **Ladies Home Companion** cover featured Sophia Loren and Carlo Ponti, *"The Church Forced Me To Divorce My Husband,"* plus a sticker, *"President Kennedy's Last Day In The Whitehouse"*. Later, it was re-issued with a Jack and Jacqueline Kennedy commemorative cover. The November 1964 issue reprised the grim anniversary, with *"Kennedy Family, One Year After."* Jackie Kennedy became a fascination for many celebrity magazines and Fass ran cover teasers with photos (**Photo TV Land** and **TV Photo Story** in particular) into the 1970s. The fallen President's siblings would also feature (*The day the doctors asked Bobby To Tell The Truth To Teddy about his injuries,)* **Ladies Home Companion,** April 1965. After his younger brother's fateful death (assassinated June 5, 1968), *M.F. Enterprises* assembled **Robert Francis Kennedy Memorial Issue** for prompt release. It had been preceded by another solemn memento, **Martin Luther King Memorial Collector's Edition** (assassinated April 4, *Country Wide)*

The iconic actor and much loved "American" (1907-1979) was also honoured with **John Wayne, Duke's Own Story** *(Reliance Publications,* 1979). Other themed one-shots included: **Elizabeth Taylor's Love Diary 1st Edition 1946-1962 In Her Own Words** (fall, no year), **Farrah Fawcett, *("Her Beauty Look,"*** 1977, *Stories, Layout),* **Frank Sinatra Jr: Celebrity Annual v1#1** (1964, *Country Wide), John Denver (Rocky Mountain Minstrel,* 1976, *Countrywide),* **James Dean** *(A Tribute To Rock's Greatest Influence,* 1977, *Tempest)* and **Travolta Fever** (2 issues, 1978, *National Newsstand/Great American Magazines).* The latter competing with an LP recording of same name. **Elizabeth Taylor's Love Diary** was listed as a *Movie TV Secrets Celebrity Issue,* from *Country-Wide, Inc.* The only issue I know of under this imprint, printed in Canada. **Nixon Cockeyed** (1976, *National Mirror)* was another foray into humour, using doctored photos of the disgraced former US President, Richard Millhouse Nixon (1919-1994) and his aides of the time. All with ironic captions. It started on the front cover with a bald-headed version, *"Dick to Play Kojak - Telly Out!"* In this case, Telly was Savalas, the TV series star Fass also produced the following celebrity gossip titles. **Inside Movie/TV & Inside Movie, Movie Lies** *("All The Poop From Hollywood"* one-shot? May 1971), **Movie TV Secrets** and **True Movie** (1962-3). **Photo TV Land** and **TV Photo Story** ran from the mid-1960s until the early 1970s. It was joined briefly by the confusing TV Photo Land.






JAWS
OF DEATH-PART II
THE NIGHTMARE OF BEING EATEN ALIVE
PROFILES OF THE MOST DANGEROUS MANEATERS IN THE WORLD
THE FIGHT OF THE CENTURY
—The Man Who Will Fight A Great White Shark For A Million Dollars
THE BIZARRE RELIGIOUS CULT THAT OFFERS THEIR BODIES TO THE MURDEROUS JAWS OF THE MANEATERS

Yeah, Yeah, Yeah!

The Beatles were the subjects of several Fass magazines, including: **Beatles Personality Album** (also printed in Canada), **Modern Annual v1#1** *(Beatles, Battle Of The Groups)*, **Popular Annual #1** *(Dave Clark 5 Vs The Beatles)*, all from 1964, **Beatles Yesterday and Today** (1975), **McCartney: Beatle On Wings** ***(Countrywide*, 1976), Welcome Back Beatles** (series, 1977-9), **Here Come The Beatles/Beatles Film Festival (v1#1/v1#2,** 1978), **Beatles Special** (fall 1978). With typical Fass ingenuity, the lovable Liverpudlian moptops were displaced from the 1979 issues of **Welcome Back Beatles,** initially by the double-feature *"How to Get A Date With Billy Joel/ Why Meatloaf's 300 Pounds Turns Girls On"* (summer) and then by *"How To Write Gene Simmons of Kiss and Become A Millionaire"* (fall). Regular titles like **Movie TV Secrets (v4#11,** Aug-64) would skew their covers and contents occasionally, with such stories as *"Why Beatle Paul McCartney keeps his Marriage Secret."* The following were released in the wake of John Lennon's assassination, December 8, 1980. **John Lennon The Legend** *(S.J),* **John Lennon Memorial Issue 1940-1980** *(S.J.),* **John Lennon Beatles: A Special Tribute** *(Harris)* and **John Lennon Beatles Memory Book** *(Harris).* At the height of the swingin' sixties, the iconic London born fashion model, Lesley Hornby got her own magazine, **Twiggy, Her Mod Mod Teen World** *(Beauty Secrets, Inc,* 1967). Inside, were articles on *The Face of 1967, You Can Have The Twiggy Look* and *Modeling Tips*. In later years,**Engelbert Humperdinck, Frampton** *(Peter's Own Story,* 1977), **Led Zep** (Led Zeppelin), **Rock's Nova Bowie** (David Bowie), **Everybody Goes Crazy Over The Who, The Rolling Stones** (Super Rock Spectacular) and **Supreme Rock Elton** (Elton John) would enthral Anglophiles, if only briefly.

The iconic US rock band Kiss were also the subject of numerous dedicated magazines. Fass added **Award Winning Kiss, Kiss Special**, plus several one shots into the mix. In a classic series, Kiss were thought to be dead? kidnapped?, joined by Superman or better than Elvis? Other subjects of hoaxes, which Fass then exposed, include **Paul McCartney Dead The Great Hoax** (1969, reprinted 1978), **Frampton Dead The Great Hoax** (1978), or *"Goodbye Frampton", "The Old Frampton is all Washed Up"* (Groupie Rock Special, fall 1978). The May 1978, **Official UFO v3#4** *(Countrywide Publications)* featured one of the company's most fantastic spoofs. The cover captions read, *"Scientific Proof Positive: Elvis' Living Clone - Exact Duplicate Escapes." "$100,000 Reward Offered For Information Leading To Recovery Of Clone. If You Loved Elvis, Please Help Us."* The cover image shows an Elvis like creature, with large scar tissue over the heart area, inside a glass tube. Presley (born, 1935) had died on 17th August 1977. In sombre reflection, *Stories, Layouts and Press* offered **Remember Me - Elvis The King** and **The Only Woman Elvis Ever Loved, Priscilla: Her Story** (both 1977), plus **Personality Parade Elvis: the Legend Lives On** (series, 1980-1, *S.J. Publications).* Other music or teenage titles from the company include: **15 Fever/Fifteen Fever, Acid Rock, Country-Western Stars, Fabian-Frankie Avalon** (combined title, 1959, *Country Wide),*
Fourteen Magazine, Groupie Rock (plus **Special**), **Hard Rock, Punk Rock** (plus a **Special**), **Rock, Rock Fever Awards, Rock Mania, Rock'N Roll Special, Rock Spectacular and Super Rock** (plus **Awards and Spectacular**) and **Video Super Hits** (1976, *Fonzie vs Barbarino)*

The Ring Cycle

Among the sports magazines discovered are: **Countrywide Sports, Karate International, Kickoff Pro Football/NFL Kickoff Pro Football, All-Time Greatest (Stanley Cup, Superbowl** and **World Series** known), **Baseball Immortals, Baseball Stars of Fame, Good Old Times** *(Baseball's Greatest),***Special Baseball Classics, Sports Extra, Sports Review Pro Football**, plus the following series: **Hall of Fame/ Sports Hall of Fame** ***(Baseball),* Illustrated Fact Book** and **Sports Specials (Baseball, Basketball, Karate, Hockey, Pro Football, Wrestling** known over the various titles). For the lifestyle/hobbies fan there was: **Action Black Belt, Dogs** ***(The Magazine for Everyone Who Enjoys Them),* Exercise And Health, Masters Of Self Defense, New Ideas For Diet and Exercise, Outdoor Sports Life, Official American Horseman/American Horseman, Popular Dogs,Showdogs** and **Today's Jogger**. **American Horseman** *(Countrywide)* and **Official American Horseman** *(Stories, Layouts)* were separate publications, with an unrelated version of the former during the 1940s

The final selection are devoted to motorcycles, or sports cars: **Cycle Illustrated** (plus - **Buyer's Guide, - Road Test Annual, - Chopper Yearbook**), **Dirt Cycle, Import and Sports Car,**

Motor Cycle World, Motor Cycle World's Special Choppers and **Street Car Racer**.

One might be excused for thinking these good sports were exempt from usual Fass practices. Here is what motorcycle aficionado, writer and *"young British Editor"* Frank Melling reported. *"This was a somewhat surreal life-style in that my American employers didn't know that I had another job and also had no idea of the very finite limits of my journalistic abilities. Based in New York, rather than the fashionable West Coast of America, the two sister magazines ("Cycle Illustrated" and "Motor Cycle World") survived by a constant stream of "world exclusives" - some of them operating on the very thinnest margins of what constituted the truth. I knew that things were serious when the editor Morris Alpern, 'phoned me, rather than wrote, with specific instructions to: "Get a story on the bike which wins the Isle of Man TT pavement races.""*

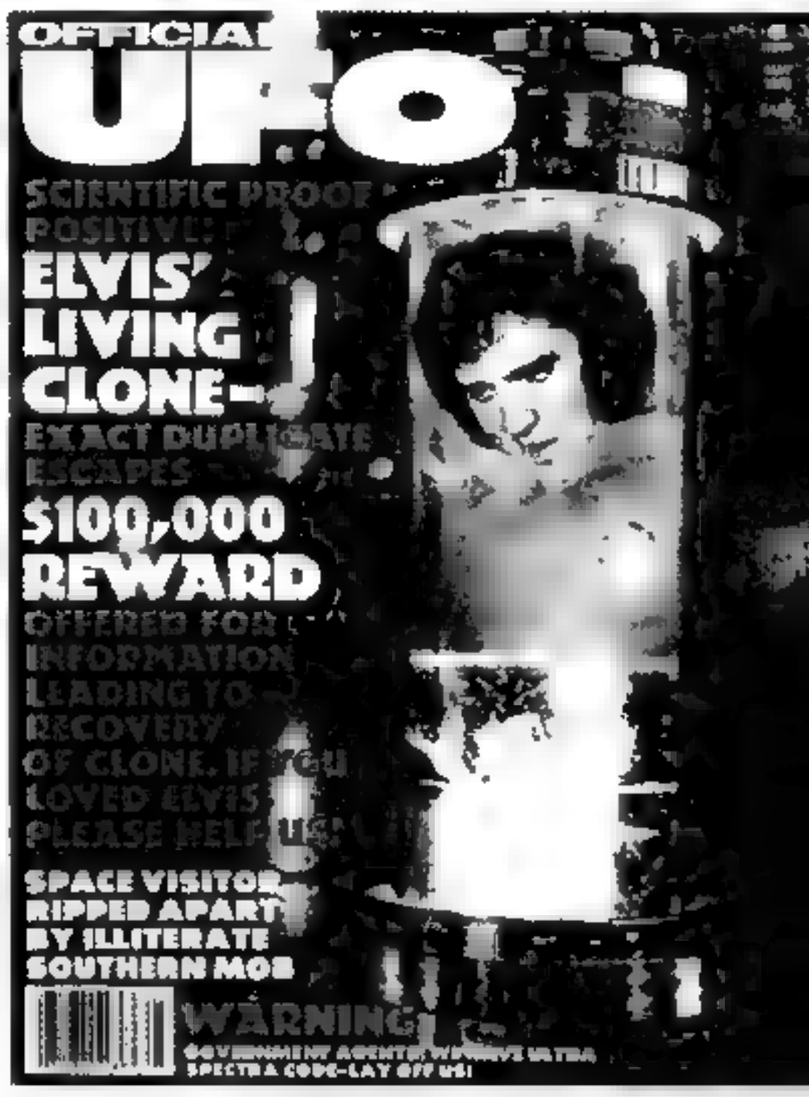
Send in the Clones

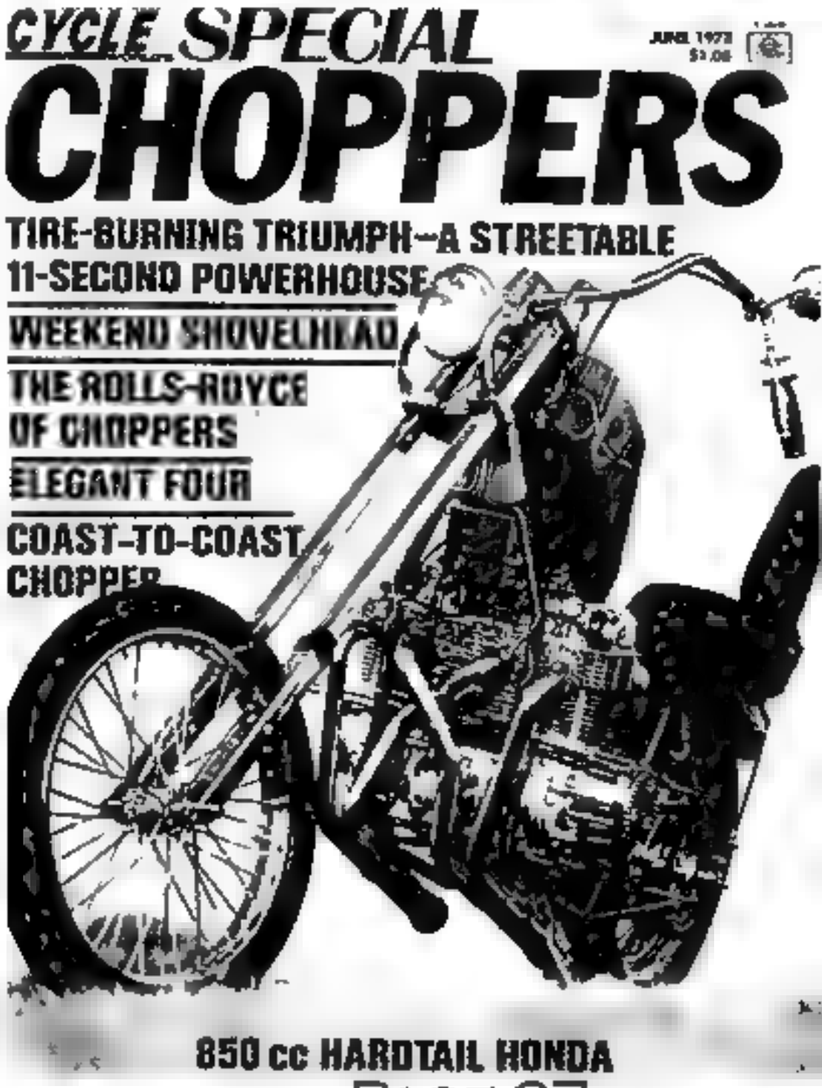
Whilst most, if not all Fass mags could be considered exploitative, the UFO/alien encounter are a special genre that Fass encouraged in the 1970s. Several are spoken of in hushed tones by ufologists and close encounter fans. The known series titles are: **Ancient Astronauts** (plus a **Special**), **ESP, Official UFO** (two series, plus **Special Editions**), **Official UFO Encyclopedia, UFO Confidential** (1981), **UFO Sightings** (1980-1), **UFO Uncensored** and the following one-shots: **Clones** (summer 1978, *Official UFO Collector's Edition)*, **Cosmic Astronauts, UFO Encounters** and **Unidentified Flying Objects**. Also included here is **Houdini's Magic Magazine,** which didn't fit anywhere else *(Stories, Layouts & Press,* 1977-8). The reputed **Uri Geller** magazine from Fass continues to elude Considered to be intimate acts performed on humans after alien abduction, **Close Encounters of the Fourth Kind** has two known issues (**v5#1** and **#2,** April and June 1978, *Countrywide Publications).* The second contains such unsettling features as: *"Those No-Answer Phone Call May be Aliens Contacting You," "Beware of Your Psychiatrist, He Might be a Visitor From Outer Space," "C.B. Radio Interference Really Caused by Alien UFO's," "Alien Camp Instructors Practice Mind Control on Children,"* and *"UFO Beam Instantly Ages Soldier."*

In 1997 *(Confessions Of A Tesla Nerd)*, Marc J. Seifer, Ph.D had this to say about Howard Smukler *"Howard was teaching a course on UFO's at both the New School in New York and also at URI Extension Division in Providence where I was also teaching."* Marc continues *"One day he returned from New York as editor-in- chief of two separate national magazines, Ancient Astronauts and ESP. He had simply walked into* Countrywide Publications *and pitched the publisher, Myron Fass, on both topics. "How'd you do it?" I said completely amazed at his most recent coup. "I figured that if the guy could have magazines on remote controlled airplanes and show dogs, they could have one on ESP or extra-terrestrials. I pitched each topic, and to my amazement, Myron gave me both! As long as I can keep the circulation above 20,000, he doesn't care what it's on, "he said. "You could do one on toilet seats." "*

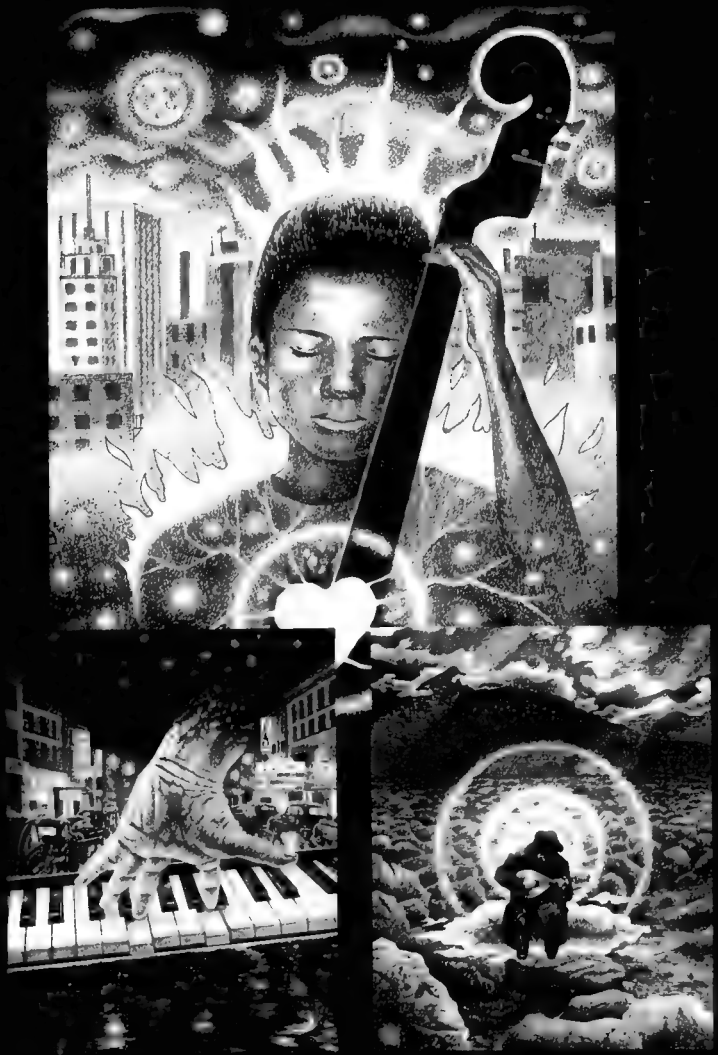
Next time (only in **From The Tomb #25**, your favourite comics retro-magazine) we will conclude our overview of the publications of Myron Fass. We start by looking at two more formative magazine titles, True Or False and Strange Unknown. We look at the lurid weekly tabloid papers and several exploitation one-shot magazines, the distribution of Fass's publications, plus the gun and female interest titles. There is also the involvement of Stanley R. Harris and his father William in the Fass set-up. We close the review by looking at the final magazines of the Fass brothers and two revealing legal disputes that Myron Fass was involved in. One would see the end of Myron Fass's NY operation. See you next time >>

This has been: A Fatboy Production 6th December 2007


OFFICIAL
UFO
SCIENTIFIC PROOF POSITIVE!
ELVIS' LIVING CLONE!
EXACT DUPLICATE ESCAPES
$100,000 REWARD
OFFERED FOR INFORMATION LEADING TO RECOVERY OF CLONE. IF YOU LOVED ELVIS PLEASE HELP US!
SPACE VISITOR RIPPED APART BY ILLITERATE SOUTHERN MOB
WARNING!



Across the page Gasm #2, Oogle #6 (January 1960), Jaws of Death Part Two (1978), and on this page a very familiar image fronting Shock Tales, the unbelievable Elvis clone from a Official UFO (May 1978), and finally Cycle Special: Choppers Volume 2 #1 (June 1973).



From the top: Sean Madden's jazz inspired "The Big Note" and sitting below "Jazz Avenue" sold in the middle of a performance with his old band and "Melodic Muse". The title page loads with the disturbing "Man With The Self Eating Face".

PSYCHOTICA

THE SURREAL TERRORS OF SEAN MADDEN

INTERVIEWED BY PETER NORMANTON

Can you tell us about your early years and what turned you towards your particular style of art.

I was one weird kid, man. When the other kids were drawing kittens and flowers, I was drawing space zombies with knives— all sorts of crazy things. I remember my kindergarten teacher freaking out because she assigned us this simple task— to make a mask out of construction paper. Mine ended up with six eyes and long tentacles coming out of its mouth. She didn't know what to say.

So, it's always been a part of me. It's been a natural extension of who I am.

Were comic books a part of these years?

Comic books were always a huge influence—especially the early Marvel Comics like The Hulk or Iron Man— back when they were still good. I didn't get into the underground comic scene until the end of eighth grade (in the 70's), thanks to a friend who had a copy of Zap Comics. That's when I first saw the work of Robert Williams and S. Clay Wilson— guys like that. I couldn't believe it. Zap was just so insane and filthy and stream of consciousness— and here I was in a grungy little industrial town with grey and brown and rust all around me. I saw this comic book and it just knocked me out. I understood it immediately. I understood the crazy, anti-societal catharsis and the intelligent political humour the artists were after. We were pretty rebellious, my friends and I. We were a group of delinquent drug heads who stole cars and broke into businesses and stole cash registers and cases of beer, cases of cigarettes— really bad kids. So, this rebellion really turned me on, and affected my art.

With all of this going on in your life what was your earliest experience with the surreal, on canvas or otherwise?

Well, around this same time, I saw Dali's work for the first time in a book. I went completely insane. I couldn't believe what I was seeing. That book changed my life. When I finally did start to paint seriously— in my later teens— that's who I wanted to be like. I wanted to dig down as deep as I could go.

Could you let the readers of From the Tomb hear about your first paying art gig at the restaurant, this is one of those larger than life stories which just has to be heard.

Well, a few years later— I was 18— I painted murals and signs for a restaurant that a friend's older brother was opening. This older brother was criminally insane. He had a long arrest record, and was constantly in and out of mental hospitals and jails, and had all of these deranged contacts in the crime world. He was a legend in my neighbourhood. We used to pawn off our stolen merchandise to him. He trained us in the finer points of drug dealing and crime, like how to spot out undercover cops, and how to spot when we were being followed. Eventually, he offered me this job after seeing some of my work. I painted giant pies, hamburgers, and cheesecakes on the walls of this place. It really looked great, but it took a weird turn. The sandwiches soon had had mouths and eyes, and there were planets on the ceiling and crazy looking creatures with orange and green hair all over the front bricks outside. It started to look like a feverish nightmare. But, this guy didn't stop me. He encouraged it. I think all the drugs he did affected his judgement. These gun-toting derelicts always came in to do business with this guy— I guess he had his mind on other things. When I say derelicts, I mean derelicts. These were unemployable, brain damaged psychopaths— men and women— who had nothing good about them. These

folks were beyond repair.

Eventually, it became clear that no one would eat at this restaurant. They stared at it from the parking lot, shuffled their feet a little, and walked the other way. They weren't sure if it was a restaurant or an opium-den-orgy-palace. This business failure sent this lunatic into a self-medicating depression— a serious one. He would smoke pot, non-stop— and I mean, non-stop— from the time he woke up until the time he went to bed. It was like he was immune to its effects. That's when I began to realize just how sick this guy was. I got what payment I could, and I left this scene.

A few months later, I heard that this guy disappeared— probably due to the funds to start the business to begin with. I was in a bar in my neighbourhood having a good time, and two older guys came in. I recognized them from the restaurant. They approached me and said, "Hey, aren't you the kid who did all the work for Freddie's place? We haven't seen him in a while. He's disappeared and we're worried about him. He's gone off his medication."

I let them know that I knew nothing, and that I wanted to be left alone. It was very scary, but a good lesson.

Thank your lucky stars! In a previous interview you refer to intelligent art and music, how do you see this when you are looking at a painting or listening to a piece of music?

If it looks like polite commercialised art that everyone else is doing, or if it sounds like music that's on the radio — I hate it. Hieronymus Bosch used to dig way down into the roots of his psyche and pull out the demons that lived there. He portrayed them in these fits of violent sexual frenzy. In doing so, he took us to paradise and hell, and showed us our own ignorance. And — he did it with a sense of craft. Compare that with Thomas Kinkade or half of the garbage that you see in these dim-witted galleries throughout the U.S. galleries that are filled with jewellery-strewn old ladies with wine glasses. They swoon over a painting of fruit or flowers, completely unaware of this archetypal landscape that they could be experiencing if they'd open their snobby myopic little eyeballs.

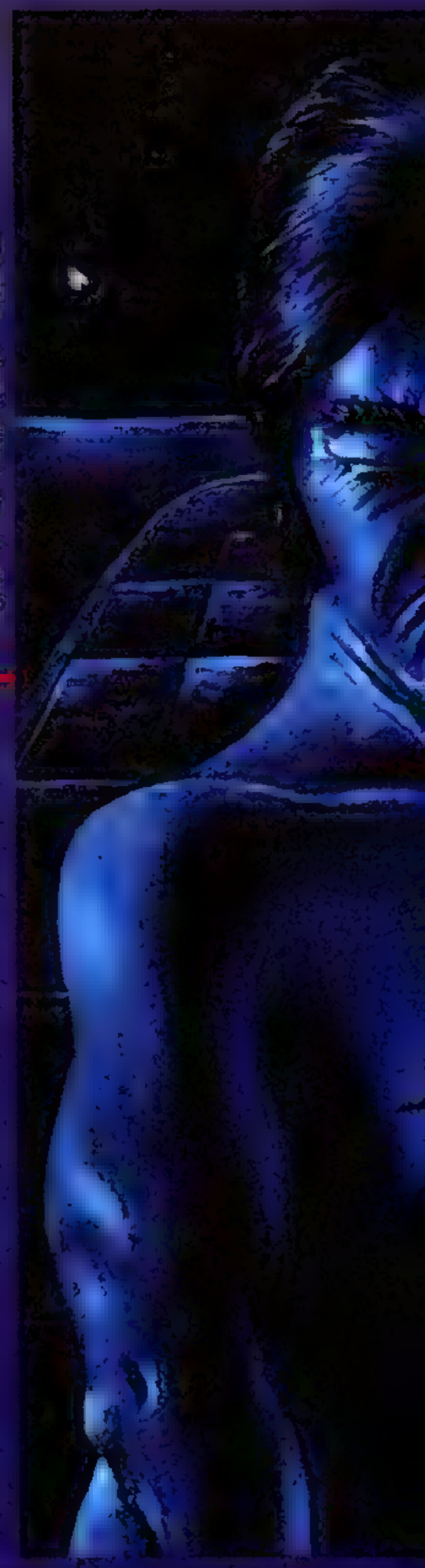
If these conformist old bags and twits would just shut up, and stay inside the house to rearrange their furniture and read the Bible, everything would be great in the art world. But they're self important mouths flap incessantly, and spineless masses listen to them, and it takes a guy like me to play the little boy in "The Emperor has no Clothes." I have to say, "Hey! What the hell do you know about art, you lifeless fake?!!? You haven't even lived."

Vast expanses of this culture (and I mean the U.S.) have no idea what real art, or real music is. I went to a concert recently— an old guitar teacher of mine, and his quartet. They were playing all of this crazy improvisatory jazz. Dark, jagged chord structures, frenetic bass lines, all played over insane polyrhythmic drumming. These guys were smoking! Half the audience left after the second tune. I couldn't believe it. I was sitting there, just grooving away on all the colours and shapes these guys were creating with their instruments— and people were leaving.

I've lived in the middle of this dynamic for years and I can tell you all about it. I've lived it in both life and art.

He shouldn't worry, people used do the same at Alice Cooper concerts almost forty years ago and I've seen it happen at a Chick Corea gig over here in Manchester. Do you feel it essential to include this intelligence in your own work, or is there ever a desire to create a purely aesthetic piece, even if it does scare the pants off you?

Page 26: From the left "The Mother of Urban Psychopathology" and "The Greeters".
Page 27: "Monster Nun" and "Drum Solo"
Page 28-29 (this page) "The Temptations of St. Mildred" used in the film "My First Mister".
Page 30 "The Voyage of Little Smoke" used as the cover to S.R. Staley's book "Psychotica" and more nuns "In God We Trust".
Page 31 A particular favourite of mine - "Bud's New Brand", almost a parody of Robert Crumb's immortal "Stoned Again".
Page 32 We close Sean's interview with "Bass Solo" and the unsettling "Satan's Anus"



I do have the desire to create for pure aesthetics— but not the ability. If there's not some sort of edge to what I'm doing— I just can't do it; at least not for long. I have too much to say inside to keep my mouth shut. It has to come out creatively. Even with a still life, the caustic side of me comes out.

The exception to this has always been the musical art I do, especially the jazz pieces. They're always more pleasant and spiritual. There's always these waves of energy flowing out of the subjects when they play, and people always enjoy these paintings. Strangely enough— musicians seem to enjoy those works.

It doesn't surprise me to hear that musicians enjoy these pieces; they are very different to the horrors in your more surreal pieces. Of all the more modern surrealists, who really impresses you?

There's more to be impressed with, inspired by, and jealous of these days than ever before. I really love the stuff that Eric White does, or Mark Ryden. They're very good painters with insane ideas and they portray those ideas well. RS Connett is a guy that I do a lot of correspondence with. His work is really wild, and reminds me of Bosch's in the sense that he just opens his head up and shows you what's in there. He doesn't care what you think of it— and I know from experience how hard it can be to justify that level of expression. People tell you all the time to be a trailblazer and do what's never been done before— but actually do it— and these same folks wrinkle their noses at you.

Being a surrealist in the true sense of the word is no easy path. You suffer the slings and arrows.

Being a fan of the Teletubbies, I just love Mark's send up, although those faces are the stuff of nightmares and when I look at Eric's desire to mutate the human form, there's the feeling he just might be able to do something with my ugly mug. As for Robert Connett, any time spent in the company of his dark canvases would provide inspiration for an entire library of literary terror. Each of these artists represent a challenge to the world in which we live, is there a need to be constantly challenged by your own art, and the paintings, film and music you experience?

I can't listen to the radio anymore, and I can barely watch any of the newer commercial movies. They're not art— they're pre-formulated products aimed at ensnaring the drooling slack-jawed masses of redundant DNA.

You seem more than happy to explain the meaning and nature lying beneath the surface of your work, does part of you ever feel your art should be viewed on its own merits without the need to elaborate on your intent?

I'm ashamed to admit it, but I think I've done my best work when I couldn't actually describe my intention. Man with the Self-Eating Face is a good example. I didn't realize that this drawing was about a person on the verge of a deeply emotionally cathartic experience until a month later when someone asked what it all meant. I'd spent so much energy creating it, but never actually looked at it. I saw the muscular straining , the sweat, and the teeth gritting and I realized it was about being right at the impasse— we've all been there— when you're about to do or say something that you know will change everything and expose your inner life.

Is there ever a sense of frustration that art of any kind will no longer challenge, or you may never get to see or hear that one perfect moment of creativity?

I saw a crow jump out of a garbage can the other day with a big hunk of rotten meat in its mouth. I see kids running through the playground at my job with absolute glee. Everything is art. It doesn't get much better than the stuff that surrounds you every day.

Have you been able to establish a regular base of clients, or are you the beneficiary of a supply of new admirers?

I have plenty of admirers, have gotten lots of recognition, and have some great sales, but people don't always realize that I've made my living as a school counsellor. I really live a dual life as a respected artist, and respected counsellor. I've done well in both disciplines. I made the decision many years ago never to be solely dependent on my art, because I'd starve. In a way, I guess it was good for me to have had the negative experiences I did in the art world as an adolescent— it helped

me decide to attend college to pursue solid career. I have kids to raise and I like them to be able to eat, and to have my own home and all the other stuff I need. So, art has always been my avocation rather than my sole vocation. The benefits are that I've never had to listen to any art director. I've been able to turn work away if it offended me. However, if I could do art full time, I would leave the counselling field in a second. It's been a beautiful experience, but I have way too many scary stories to tell.

It's a shame you can go full time with your art, but is difficult when you are trying to put food on the table and keep a roof over your head. Looking at your work you use a variety of materials, are there any you favour more than others?

I had to work hard to get to know and understand acrylics and oils well. There's a lot to know when you use them. Pen and ink was never a problem for me— I took to it right away, and I've always enjoyed it.

There seems to be a strong connection between the dark vision of H.P. Lovecraft and the more terrifying elements found in surrealism. Were these ever a part of your formative years and how did you come to produce those covers for Hippocampus Press?

I never consciously sought out to do covers for any HP Lovecraft publisher, and hadn't read him as a young man, so it was very strange that publishers ended up seeking me out do illustrate his work. I guess it was the acidic greens and oranges in my work, and the bizarre, twisted creatures. When you read Lovecraft, and look at my work, you can see the connection. It is a very good fit.

Is there ever a temptation to drift into more commercial forms of art?

Hell no. Well— only if they were commercials about the downfall of organized, pseudo-political religion, and the resulting tide of humanity that would no longer be afraid to embrace their own existential freedom. Then, I would gleefully enter into commercial art free of charge. Imagine.

How do you view the reactions of so-called art critics?

Every art critic in the world could hate my guts and it wouldn't matter to me one bit. The only one I like is Robert Hughes. I have tremendous

respect for him and his opinion matters to me. I watched him tell off a snobby reporter once— it was about the Kennedy family's heirlooms being sold as art at some big event. He told it like it was— said it wasn't art, but pure greed, stupidity, and elitism. This offended the reporter and Hughes said, 'Well what the bloody hell did you ask me for? I loved it!

You have already mentioned your work as a counsellor and its disturbing nature; is there ever an occasion when individual incidents appear in your artwork?

I started out working with emotionally disturbed children 20 years ago. After I got my masters degree, I worked for a while on a very clinical mental health team. My caseload was comprised of teens, who had returned home to their families after being institutionalised. I thought I was tough when I started that job because of my experiences when I was younger— but I saw levels of psychopathology in that job that really bothered me. I've seen tremendous amounts of abuse and neglect. I've seen children dumped into residential care and forgotten about. These same kids, at an early age, begin to develop criminal characteristics in order to survive institutionalisation. They become indifferent and hardened. They lose any sense of empathy. It's very ugly to see.

So— for a long time art became my release from the horrors I dealt with during my day job. These days — not so much so. I'm working in a mainstream school now, and things are much rosier there. Quite nice, actually — in comparison. I have it very good these days, and I work with some wonderful people.

I always remember, however, that with a few more wrong turns, I could've ended up a lifer in the system myself. I grew up very fast— very, very fast— and got out at a young age and went straight. But

I shudder at the way things could've gone if I didn't have painting and music and writing. I was heading straight for a life of crime.

The esteemed auteur David Lynch has had quite an influence on your approach, could you tell us how one of the truly great filmmakers of our time has had a bearing on your canvases.

I saw "Eraserhead" as a teenager, and just flipped out. I thought to myself— "My god! This guy thinks just like I do!" The absolutely insane characters that he developed in his movies— and I've seen all of them— are so psychopathically humorous. There's this self-spoofing humour about them that I just love. Dennis Hopper should have gotten an Oscar for his role as that nitrous-sniffing killer in Blue Velvet. That was absolutely amazing. So, I guess the no-holds-barred surrealism that David Lynch uses is similar to my own, but he does it with film and I do it with paint and ink. I really wish— it would be a real thrill of mine— if he were to give his opinion of my work, because I would respect it, good or bad.

I just happened to be watching TV once when he was being interviewed by Charlie Rose. He stated that he saw a psychiatrist at one point in his life, and the psychiatrist offered him a trial of medication. He asked the psychiatrist if the meds could decrease his creative impulses. The psychiatrist said it could. He shook hands with the psychiatrist and ended the relationship. That pretty much sums it for me right there as far as David Lynch being one of my heroes. I'm not against medication— that's not what I'm saying— I'm against anything that decreases my ability to create the art that flows out of me. I am who I am, and if you don't like it or you want me to stop being me, see you later.

"Eraserhead" had quite an impact on me as well, I still rate it amongst my all time favourite films. Your own experience with Hollywood however wasn't such a good one.

Well, they were dishonest. They're soulless zombies who just want to make a product. They told me that they would use 4 of my paintings in the movie, "My First Mister," with Albert Brooks, and they agreed to give me a credit at the end of the movie. They used one painting for 10 seconds, and skipped the credit. It doesn't really matter because they paid me well.

It's a relief to hear you actually got paid, I've heard too many horror stories regarding working in Hollywood. Moving from your artwork you play a definitely non-commercial style of jazz guitar, which musicians bring out the best in you?

Frank Zappa has been a huge influence on me for most of my life because he was drug-free and completely into writing this crazy music. I grew up listening to his old work with the Mothers of Invention. He was also a great soloist. But my biggest influence as a teen, and the reason I got into jazz, was Alvin Lee. I used to play his records and copy his licks all the time. When I play these days, folks will approach me and tell me they hear Alvin Lee in my playing. I play very way-out jazz and use a lot of altered scales and chord structures— very dark and ominous— but every now and then Alvin Lee still sneaks out.

It sounds as if you have been inspired by the very best. Jazz also features in your paintings; do you find this a source of inspiration when working on a painting?

It's a huge influence because it's all about colour and texture. It's also a deeply spiritual experience. When you're ripping away on your instrument and you become one with it, and you're creating these sheets of sound, you're shaking hands with ghosts and travelling through time. Just listen to gBitches Brew, h by Miles Davis. That's my favourite record of all time. You'll see what I mean.

You know after all these years I still don't own a copy of that album. How did your exhibition in your hometown go?

I sold over half of my work, and made some great money, but that's not the best part of it. I got great press. I got a full page interview in a local newspaper, a full page display in another newspaper, and an ar-

ticle in a local magazine. They all did a great job highlighting my art, and the flavour of my work. It was nice because, you see, I left my hometown as a young man, and never went back. So, I disappeared and all of the people who may have remembered me as a young thug got to read about me having all of this success as an artist, musician, and counsellor. I didn't expect it at all, and it was a nice thing to have happen on a personal level. It was kind of like vindicating my own personal history.

If you were to go back over your work what would be the one piece you would like to be remembered by?

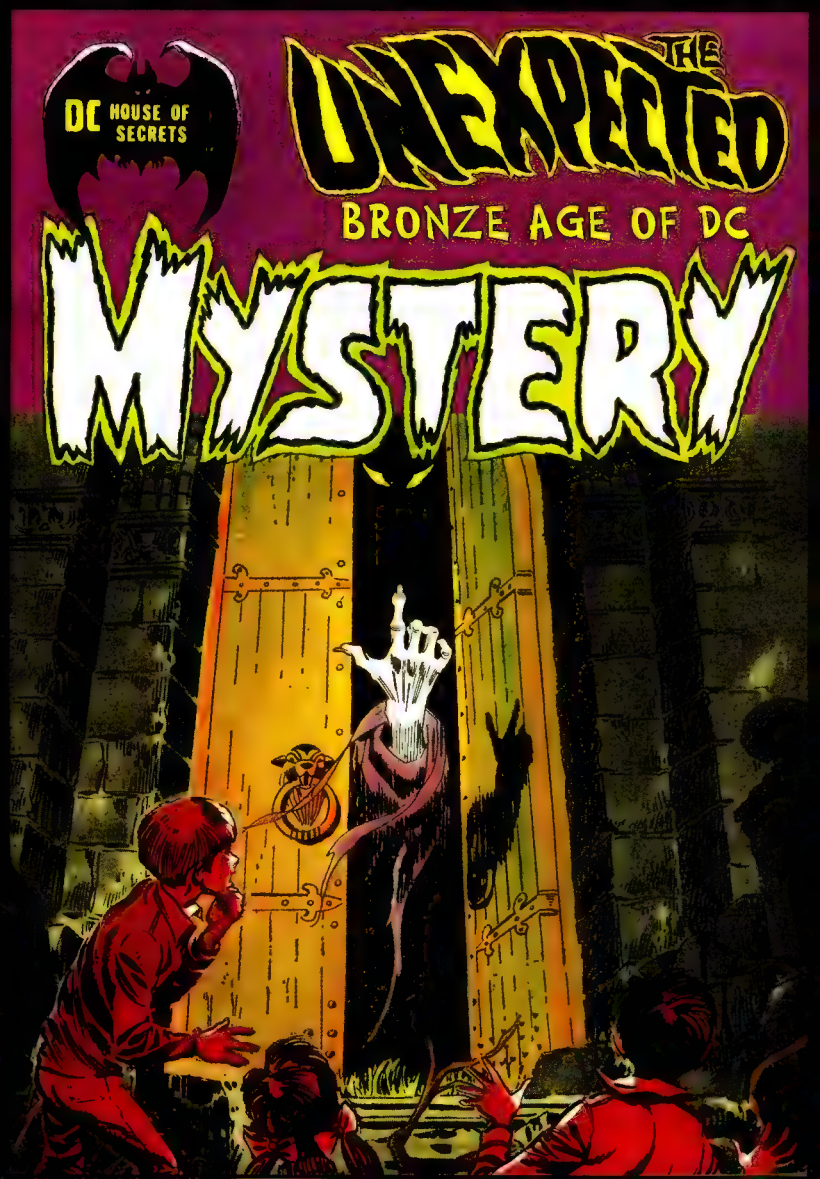
"The Temptations of St. Mildred," because a lot of my heart is in that painting, and I think it says a lot, and can be interpreted many ways. I also painted it when I began to develop more maturity as a painter and as a man. I was very unsure of myself prior to that painting.

With more and more people discovering your work what does the future hold?

I'm not sure. I guess I'd like to turn on as many people with it as I can— not in an egotistical sense— but simply for the interpersonal connection through the medium of art. Strangely enough, I wrote a children's book last year, and it's quite good. It's very different and unique, of course, but the classrooms that have read it loved it. I worked with kids for many years and have 2 of my own, and I know what kids like. So, I've discovered this other side of my artistic ability that I didn't know was there. It flows from me naturally, and people seem to really dig it— so why not? The book is called, "Vito and the Magic Bread." I won't plug it here, but anyone who wants to know more about it can contact me. The feedback on it has really been great so far!

I guess I'd also like to work with more galleries and do more shows. I've really enjoyed that, and nothing makes me happier than someone telling me they were changed somehow, or inspired creatively by seeing my work.

Thanks very much Sean for taking the time to do this interview and for supplying so much of your incredible artwork. I am sure by now you will have quite a few more admirers


DC HOUSE OF SECRETS
THE UNEXPECTED
BRONZE AGE OF DC
MYSTERY

The year was 1968 and once again America found herself wracked in turmoil.

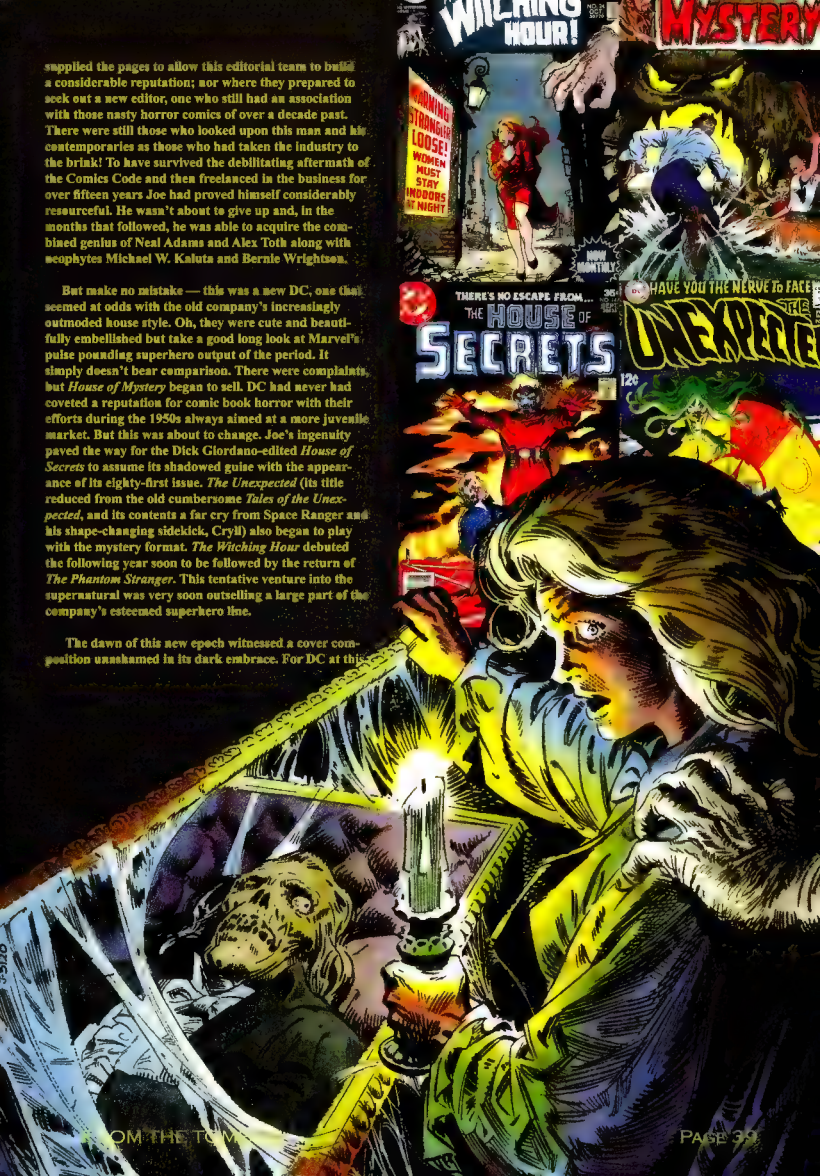
On foreign shores the conflict in Vietnam was escalating out of control, with the increasing body count and enforced draft only fuelling the widespread condemnation. With the Civil Rights movement having acquired global recognition in its struggle against inbred racism and the youth movement also beginning to voice its protest, demonstrations in the streets were now all too common. And as for the length of their hair! Step too far out of line in this America and it could all too easily have tragic consequences — so much so that it wasn't unknown for the bullets of the authorities to scythe you down in your tracks (as evidenced by the Kent State massacre of May 4 1970 when the National Guard shot and killed four student demonstrators). To the outsider some of the televised scenes echoed the days of the Wild West. And it didn't end there. Those in power could no longer lie safely in their beds. Who amongst them could outwit the deadly target of the assassin's telescopic lens (Neal Adams's 'Thrill Kill', a chilling warning of the American high school massacres to come)? Legislation may have cleaned up the comics, but the country had never purged its dark underbelly. Could it have been pure coincidence or, as has been suggested, a need for psychological unburdening; whatever the reason the dread horror comic was once again beginning to infest the newsstands.

It was to this backdrop that Joe Orlando arrived at DC as the newly appointed editor to the failing *House of Mystery*, a title then principally made up of reprints. For each issue however he was granted just enough funding to procure several pages of new artwork. With money to spend Joe set out to secure the best in-house talent of the day, but soon discovered that being the new kid on the block was not going to make the acquisition of these services easy. Understandably, his fellow editors weren't prepared to relinquish their regulars. This esteemed bunch had

supplied the pages to allow this editorial team to build a considerable reputation; nor where they prepared to seek out a new editor, one who still had an association with those nasty horror comics of over a decade past. There were still those who looked upon this man and his contemporaries as those who had taken the industry to the brink! To have survived the debilitating aftermath of the Comics Code and then freelanced in the business for over fifteen years Joe had proved himself considerably resourceful. He wasn't about to give up and, in the months that followed, he was able to acquire the combined genius of Neal Adams and Alex Toth along with neophytes Michael W. Kaluta and Bernie Wrightson.

But make no mistake — this was a new DC, one that seemed at odds with the old company's increasingly outmoded house style. Oh, they were cute and beautifully embellished but take a good long look at Marvel's pulse pounding superhero output of the period. It simply doesn't bear comparison. There were complaints, but *House of Mystery* began to sell. DC had never had coveted a reputation for comic book horror with their efforts during the 1950s always aimed at a more juvenile market. But this was about to change. Joe's ingenuity paved the way for the Dick Giordano-edited *House of Secrets* to assume its shadowed guise with the appearance of its eighty-first issue. *The Unexpected* (its title reduced from the old cumbersome *Tales of the Unexpected*, and its contents a far cry from Space Ranger and his shape-changing sidekick, Cryll) also began to play with the mystery format. *The Witching Hour* debuted the following year soon to be followed by the return of *The Phantom Stranger*. This tentative venture into the supernatural was very soon outselling a large part of the company's esteemed superhero line.

The dawn of this new epoch witnessed a cover composition unashamed in its dark embrace. For DC at this



EXPECTED
DEATH OF AN EXORCIST
13 TENSE TALES OF MENACE AND MYSTERY
15¢ DO YOU DARE ENTER MYSTERY
DO YOU DARE ENTER... THE HOUSE OF MYSTERY
20¢
PHANTOM STRANGER
YOU WILL BELIEVE IN... GHOSTS
THERE'S NO ESCAPE FROM THE HOUSE OF SECRETS
DC
WE DEFY YOU TO UNLOCK THE SHOCKING SECRETS OF HAUNTED HOUSE

Covers used in this article

Page 34: Secrets of Haunted House #3, House of Mystery #195, Phantom Stranger #30, Unexpected #158.

Page 35: Witching Hour! #24, House of Mystery #185, House of Secrets #147, Unexpected #111.

Page 36: Unexpected #160, House of Mystery #195, House of Secrets #152, House of Mystery #219, Phantom Stranger #18, Ghosts #96, House of Secrets #83, Secrets of Haunted House #5.

Page 37: Ghosts #16, Phantom Stranger #37, Phantom Stranger #1.

Page 38: House of Mystery #210, Phantom Stranger #16, House of Secrets #105, Unexpected #133, House of Secrets #89, Ghosts #32, House of Secrets #110, House of Mystery #307, Unexpected #120.

Page 39: House of Mystery #290, House of Secrets #112, Witching Hour #2, Unexpected #204, House of Secrets #189.

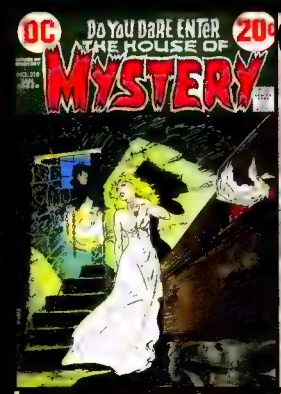
time the colouring was unusually sombre, imbued with a menace that hurled back to the dark age of comics rather than the grandeur of fabled Metropolis. The ashen claw like hand prompting the reader to enter the pages of *House of Mystery* #174 (June 1968) is now surely iconic in the world of comic book horror. Originally laid out by Joe's good friend Carmine Infantino and rendered by Joe himself, this cover has succeeded in standing the test of time. There is an absence of gore and titillation; instead a prescient sense of flesh crawling dread permeates the scene. It has one quite specific selling point, something Joe learned from his days with Bill Gaines: a cover containing its share of scared looking kids contains the potent for strong sales. So with Carmine's gnarled creation beckoning you forth only the more feeble would turn away, the threshold insists it be crossed bidding entry to this fear-spawned domain.

Orlando was soon to demonstrate he knew exactly how to do horror and this he would do with seeming glee, even though the Comics Code still exacted its influence over the publishers of these four colour comic books. While resentful of the interference from the Code, he remained careful to avoid the clutches of the werewolves and vampires banished to the grave more than ten years ago. Yet there was a distinct chill at work in these stories and the relief held in a happy ending was rarely ever on the cards.

Scriptwriters Jack Oleck and Carl Wessler, former colleagues at EC, were to once again ply their trade, with Al Williamson making a couple of appearances (see *From the Tomb* #23 for more details) along with fellow EC stalwarts Wally Wood and George Evans rendering the occasional piece. It would be the new boys however who would furnish these Houses of *Mystery* and *Secrets* with an indelible singularity. Covers by Neal Adams, Bernie Wrightson and Michael Kaluta veritably took the newsstands and stores by storm; there was nothing of their ilk in the world of four colour comics. Their work would also appear in the stories themselves, alongside such esteemed figures as John Severin, Ralph Reese, Gray Morrow, Gerry Grandenetti and the ever-entertaining Sergio Argonnes. Their unbridled desire to fulfil a creative need produced month after month of macabre relish.

Under Orlando's editorial guidance the interior stories invariably proved a match for these images, which couldn't always be said of the superhero fare. Rather than relying entirely on the rigid four tales per issue format, that was so commonplace during the horror boom of the 1950s, *House of Mystery* and its companion *House of Secrets* would frequently indulge the reader with stories running to ten or eleven pages. Jim Warren's black and white terrors *Creepy* and *Eerie* had shown that in affording more pages to each story, their dramatic impact could be made all the more poignant. "Wid-

GHOSTS
WE CHALLENGE YOU TO READ
TRUE TALES OF THE WEIRD AND SUPERNATU
THE MOTHBALL GHOST
DEATH'S GRINNING FACE
HAUNTED HERO OF ST. HELENA


DC
Do You Dare Enter
THE HOUSE OF
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PHANTOM STRANGER
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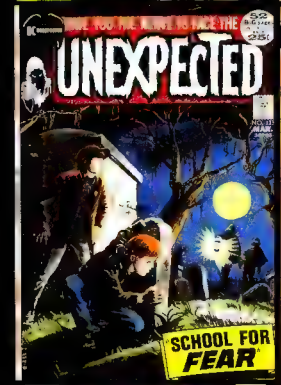
HAVE YOU THE NERVE TO FACE THE
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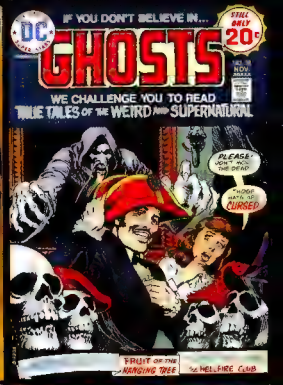
SCHOOL FOR FEAR

DC
HOUSE OF SECRETS
15¢
the HOUSE of SECRETS
Could she spend one night at Hastings Castle... and LIVE?


IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE IN...
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GHOSTS
STILL ONLY 20¢
WE CHALLENGE YOU TO READ
TRUE TALES OF THE WEIRD AND SUPERNATURAL
PLEASE! DON'T MOVE THE DEAD!
THOSE WHO MOVE THE DEAD ARE CURSED!
FRUIT OF THE HANGING TREE
THE HELLFIRE CLUB

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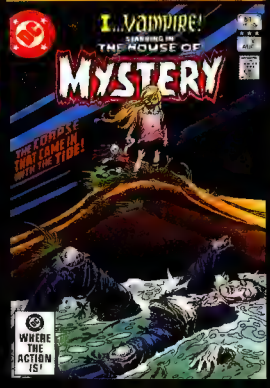
THERE'S NO ESCAPE FROM...
THE HOUSE OF SECRETS
20¢

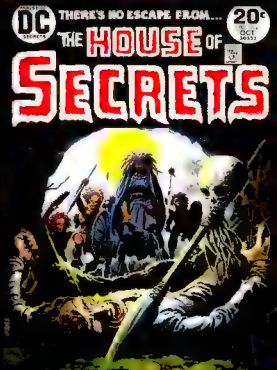

I...Vampire!
STARRING IN
THE HOUSE OF MYSTERY
SHE'S COMPLETE THAT COMES IN WITH THE TIDE!
WHERE THE ACTION IS!

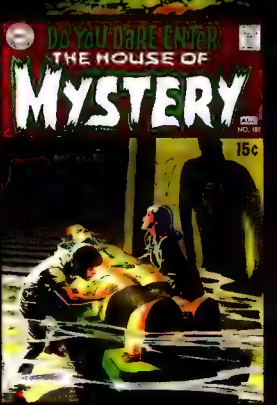
HAVE YOU THE NERVE TO FACE THE
UNEXPECTED
HOUSE HAUNTED
Do Not ENTER!
MARTIN STOP!
WE DON'T KNOW WHO OR WHAT LIVES THERE!

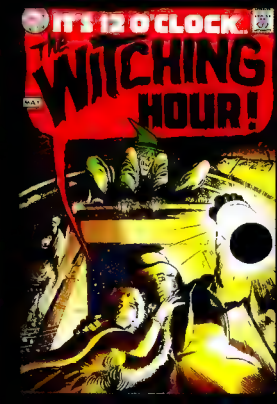
ow's Walk" scripted by Howard Post with the accompanying artistry of Neal and Joe from *House of Mystery* #179, reflects perfectly the advantage in giving over those few extra pages to a single story. This particular issue will remain celebrated for many years to come, for this observed the first appearance of Bernie Wrightson's brush strokes in a professional comic book . . . the gothic and the macabre combined in "The Man Who Murdered Himself" leading to an immediate return in the next two issues. It wasn't until the appearance of *House of Mystery* #193 that he was given the chance to pour his spine tingling sense of design into a cover. It was the first of many highly collectible images.

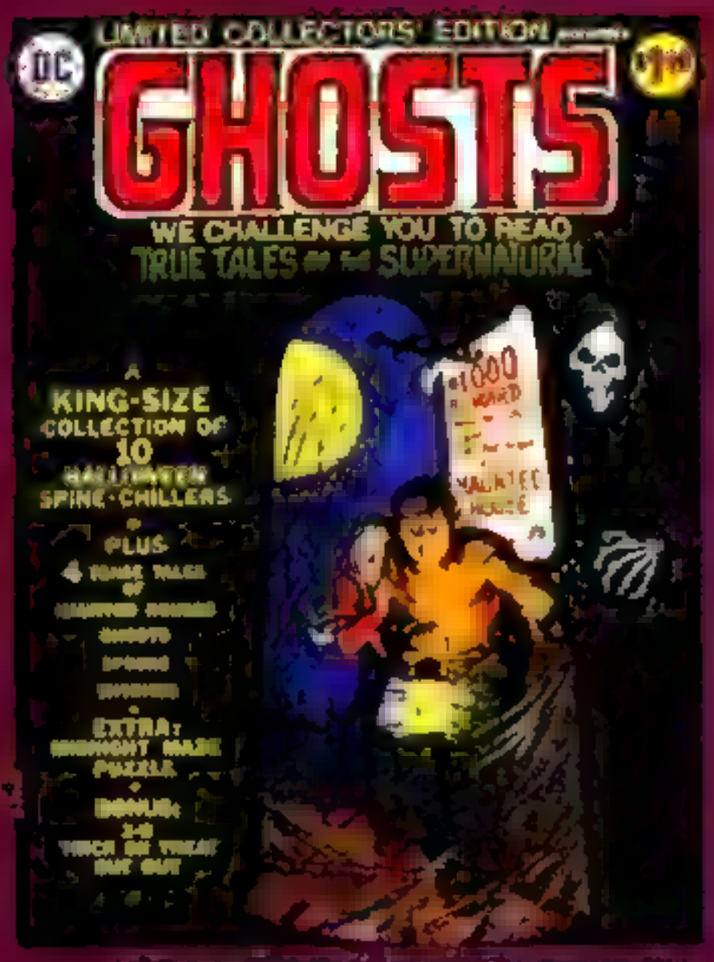
Of course it was *House of Secrets* #92's (June-July 1971) collaboration with Len Wein on "Swampthing" that would finally seal Bernie's reputation once and for all amongst comic fans. With art assists from Jeff Jones and Al Weiss, this issue remains one of the most sought-after titles from the entire bronze age of comic books, certainly amongst horror fans. Just over twelve months later DC's premier horror inspired character would appear in his own comic book, scripted by Len with art again by the now revered Bernie Wrightson. A swamp creature remarkably similar to the Swampthing, again embellished by Bernie, appeared in *House of Mystery* #195 (October 1971). Other horror-influenced characters would only ever occasionally appear in these titles. "The Patchwork-man" debuted in *House of Secrets* #140 and "Spawn of Frankenstein" initially rendered by Michael Kaluta ran from issue #23 of *Phantom Stranger* through until issue #30. The "I, Vampire" series created by Johnny DeMatteis, made sporadic appearances between issues #290 in 1981 and the finale #321, two years later in the October of 1983. This was a very brave attempt to save *House of Mystery* at a time when horror comics had fallen completely out of vogue. For the most part DC shied away from the idea of the on-going series, their approach to horror remained largely anthology-based and while trends in the marketplace changed they still seemed able to make it work.

The latter part of 1971 through into 1972 was a boom period for DC's burgeoning line of horror. Confidence was such that gothic romance titles *Dark Mansion of Forbidden Love* and *Sinister House of Secret Love* were added to their portfolio in the September and October of 1971. The second issue of *Dark Mansion* saw a cover contribution from Neal Adams while *Sinister House's* second appearance played host to a Jeff Jones cover illustration. The following year these titles observed a change in title to become *Forbidden Tales of Dark Mansion* and *Secrets of Haunted House* respectively, the call for gothic romance seemed over just a little too soon, each lasting only four issues. Their colour horror titles however were all but unchallenged with eye-catching covers by Neal Adams, Bernie Wrightson and Michael Kaluta, and former Atlas terror now turned DC war artist Russ Heath made a guest appearance on *House of Mystery* #203. Marvel, ever watchful of this phenomenon, resorted to reprints following the demise of *Chamber of Darkness* and *Tower of Shadows* and those

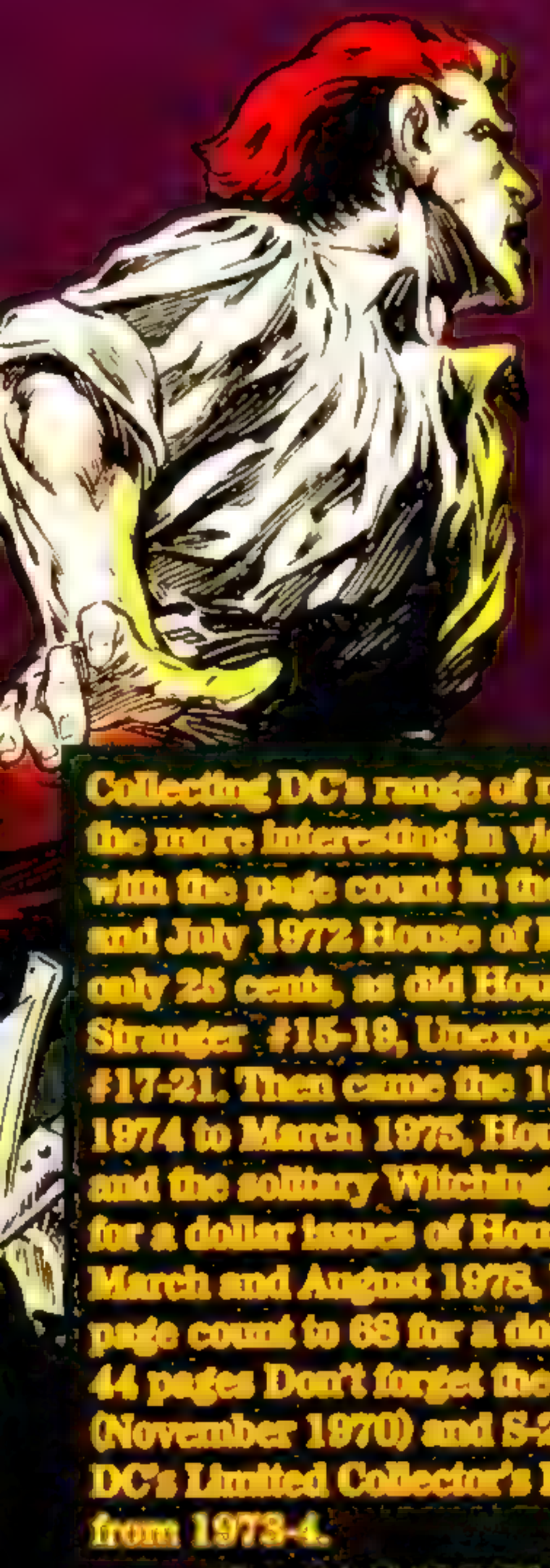








Above Nick Cardy's cover to the treasury sized Limited Edition C-32 Ghosts from January 1974. A selection of reprints from the first six issues of this title are contained within.

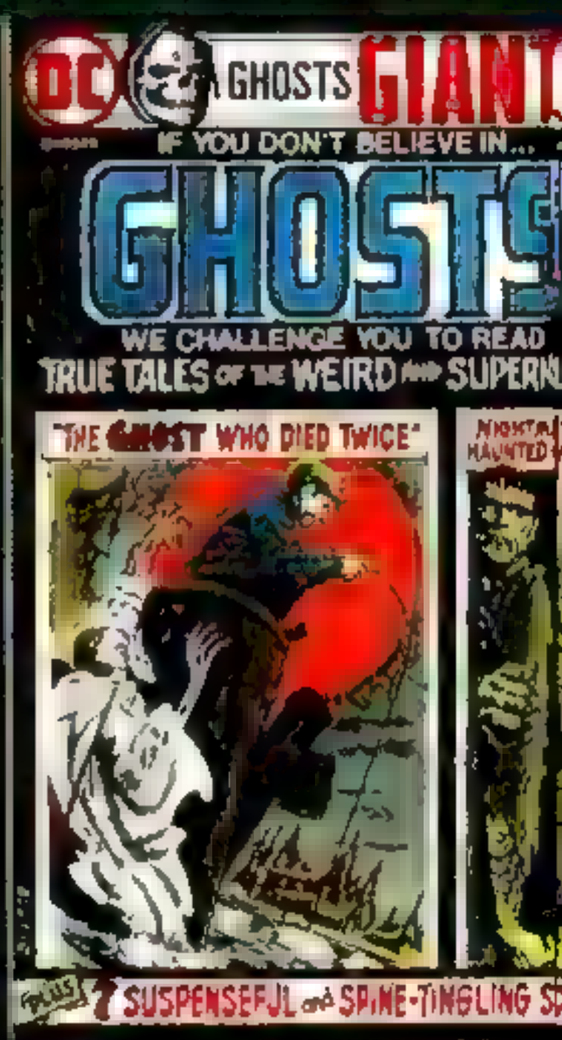


cult publishers the ever-baffling Charlton Comics were also making notable inroads in this area.

Once again the dead were on the move. The Comics Code had to be relaxed and once it had the vampires and werewolves clawed their way to terrorise these titles, DC then went on the offensive. The word "weird" was no longer taboo on the cover of a comic, so came *Weird War Tales* (September 1971) *Weird Mystery Tales* (July 1972) and *Weird Worlds* (September 1972). Although it must have been tempting for Joe Orlando, neither he or his fellow editors went too far into those disparate regions of excess, but they did have their moments. Tom Sutton's "The Thing in the Chair" had played with fire in its threat of the electric chair as early as *House of Mystery* #189 (December 1970). When the code became a little less stringent "Act III Eternity" allowed artist Jess Jodloman an excruciating death scene in the pages of *House of Secrets* #108 (June 1973). The vampire's look of anguish as the stake pierces his heart is exquisite, it contains the intensity of image more associated with Alan Hewetson's Skywald years. This same issue followed with a Rico Rival induced strangulation scene in the cover inspired "A New Kid on the Block". *The Witching Hour!* #25's (November 1972) "Happy Deathday, Sweet 16!" is laced with a sexuality not often seen in the four colour comics of this time. The artist Bill Payne has a remarkable touch, one that would have been as equally at ease with a more mature readership.

This time will also be remembered for the imaginative Filipino influence. Artists such a Tony DeZuniga, Alfredo Alcala, Rico Rival, Nestor and Virgilio Redondo, Gerry Talaoc and Alex Nino would find a welcome home in these pages and breath a quite different kind of life into this unsettling domain. Tony had studied in the States during the early sixties, but returned home to the Philippines to take up a career in advertising. By the end of the decade he was back in New York and not long after had received an assignment from Joe Orlando inking Rick Estrada on *Girl's Love Stories* #153. *Phantom Stranger* #12 (April 1971) would see his first pencilled story, on Dr. Thirteen. It was he who invited Joe and Carmine to visit the Philippines to see the work of artists such as Alfredo Alcala and Alex Nino. Alfredo was already a veteran of the Filipino comic world and, having started work in 1948, his influences included both Hal Foster and Lou Fine. It was he who in turn would inspire a generation of American comic book artists with his detailed, yet dynamic approach to horror and fantasy seen at DC and ultimately *Conan* for Marvel Comics. During his first meeting with Joe in Manila he revealed an ability to produce forty fully pencilled, inked and lettered pages per week. This was a remarkable feat, one that would keep him in work for many years to come. These artists may have come cheaper than their American counterparts, but they were to add an entirely new dimen-

Collecting DC's range of mystery and horror titles has been made all the more interesting in view of the company's repeated experimentation with the page count in the hope of improving sales. Between August 1971 and July 1972 House of Mystery #194-202 contained 52 big pages for only 25 cents, as did House of Secrets #93-98, Ghosts #1-5, Phantom Stranger #15-18, Unexpected #126-136 as well as Witching Hour! #17-21. Then came the 100 page issues for 60 cents cover dated April 1974 to March 1975, House of Mystery #224-229, Unexpected #157-162 and the solitary Witching Hour! #38. It didn't end there, the 80 pages for a dollar issues of House of Mystery #251-259 appeared between March and August 1978, Unexpected #189-195 reduced the page count to 68 for a dollar in 1979 and Witching Hour! #84 ran to 44 pages Don't forget the Super DC Giant S-20 House of Mystery (November 1970) and S-23 The Unexpected (April 1971) along with DC's Limited Collector's Edition C-23 House of Mystery and C-32 Ghosts from 1973-4.



sion to comic book folklore.

Once these creators had settled into the DC fold, a new breed of talent began to appear in the mid 1970s, one that was home grown and would eventually make its mark as the decade came to an end. Arthur Suydam's classically inspired brush strokes, coupled with that wondrous touch of Frank Frazetta would have taken many readers of these titles by surprise. His appearance at DC wasn't to carry the herald of a clarion call and this early work now appears almost forgotten. "A Carnival of Dwarfs" from *House of Secrets* #119 (May 1974) is a marvellous opportunity to savour this imaginative fellow's fledgling art, all ten pages of it. The next three years would see only five more of his tales in those Houses of *Mystery* and *Secrets*. Their seeming neglect is a reminder as to just how much DC's assembly of mystery and horror titles still have to offer the more discerning enthusiast. There followed occasional pieces by Jim Starlin, then Marshall Rogers, Michael Golden, Keith Giffen and Tom Sutton whose like would keep these titles alive as they tried to survive this ever-changing industry.

Comic book terror seemed consigned to the grave as the sun dawned on 1975. Skywald would soon be no more; Charlton staggered on, making use of an over abundance of reprints; Marvel drastically reduced its line; and Eerie Publications simply cut their off-beat horrors, if only for a while. With considerably less competition, DC refused to lay down and die. *Secrets of Haunted House* was released in the April of that year, a revamp of *Secrets of Sinister House*, which had been cancelled following its eighteenth issue in the June of the previous year. With art by Alex Nino, the debut promised much. Michael Kaluta supplied several covers during the ensuing year to induce potential newcomers to this latest addition to DC's line of comic book terror.

But it wasn't going to be easy. The sombre shades that had been the trademark of the covers to the company's mysterious fare were now so much brighter, much like their superhero titles. While the imagery suggested terrors within, these colours were too sharp, too distinct . . . reflecting a subtle change in character. Adams, Wrightson and Kaluta had all moved on, now making only the occasional contribution. With Vietnam over and Watergate already an unsavoury memory, America once again seemed the land of the free. As the sun's rays now warmed the American heartland there was no longer a need for the horror comic to unburden the national conscience.

Weird Mystery Tales was the first casualty, with issue #24 in the November of 1975. *Phantom Stranger* would cease to appear with its 41st issue a few months later in February 1976. DC made every effort to re-invent its flagging line with 68 page and 84 page issues for a dollar and a dollar twenty-five. Alas to no avail, *House of Secrets* closed its doors with #154 alongside *The Witching Hour!* #85, both cover dated October 1978) they

Above the regular sized Weird Mystery Tales #4 and in the caption below the 100 page Ghosts #38 with another Nick Cardy cover, the later eighty page House of Mystery #256 was served by a cover rendered by Bernie Wrightson, the highly collectible 52 page debut for Sinister House of Secret Love and another 100 page extravaganza - House of Mystery #224.

[illegible] Steve Ditko would be enlisted supplying work for both of DC's remaining horror titles *The Unexpected* and *House of Mystery*.

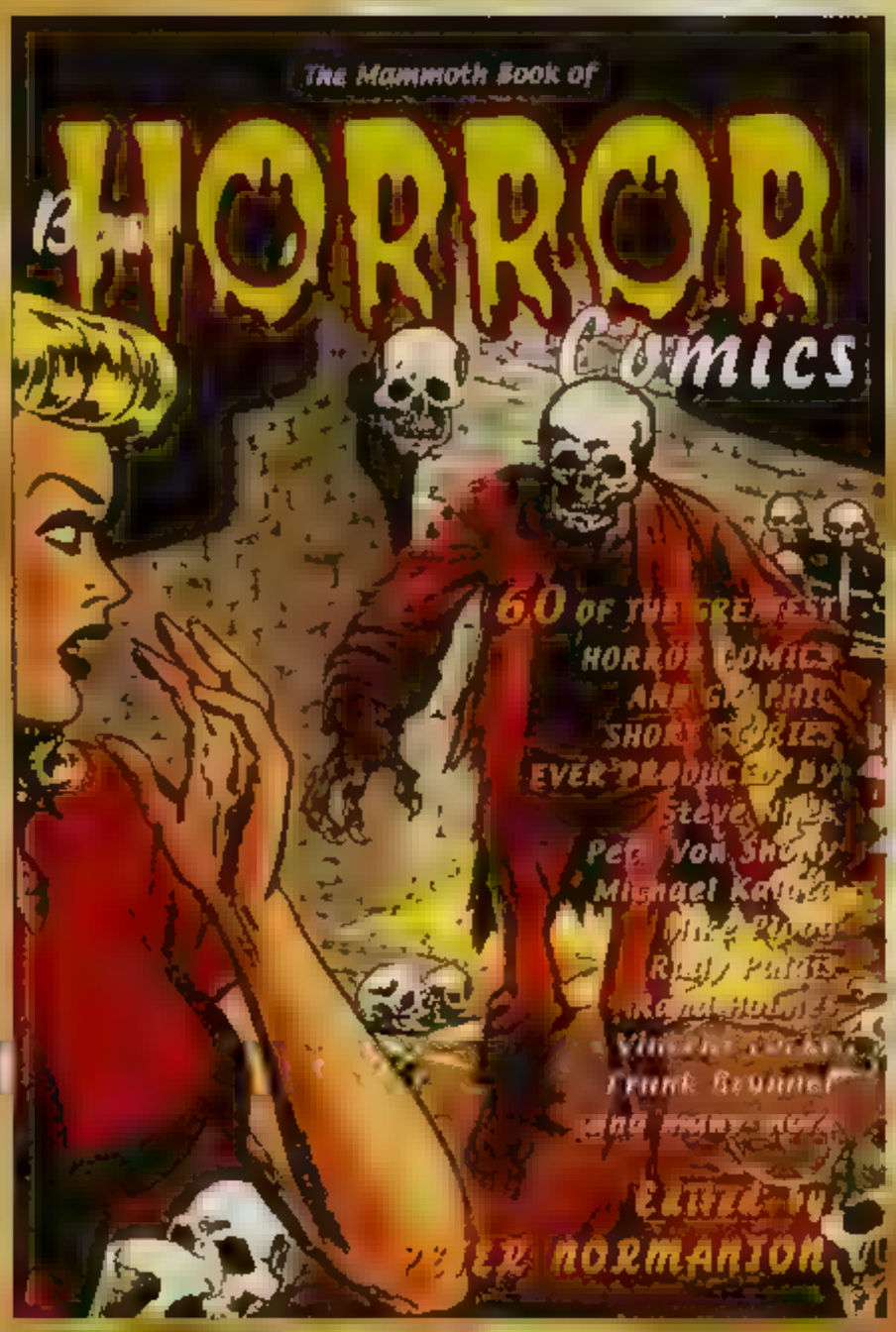
Earlier that year DC had tried to fantasise potential horror readers with *Madame Xanadu*, *Doorway to Nightmare*. The mild eroticism combined with Michael Kaluta's eye-catching covers sadly failed to capture the comic buying public's attention. With its fifth issue the title was abruptly cancelled, this too merged with the now hopelessly overcrowded *Unexpected* with #190. *The Unexpected* survived for almost another four years, frequently returning to the science fiction of its early years. Issue #221 the curtain finally came down in the October of 1982. *House of Mystery* (thanks to the introduction of a vampire) was able to continue for another twelve months before the inevitability of the shutters being drawn in with issue #282. The latter part of the 1970s and the early 1980s saw the costumed superhero acquire the ascendancy one more time. The graveyard shift had at long last been brought to a close.

As sad as this demise may have been, DC should still be congratulated. They had managed to keep a four-colour horror anthology title alive for fifteen years. In the competitive and continually evolving world of comic books this is quite an achievement. Probably of more significance *House of Secrets* had spawned *Swamp Thing*, the title that would help pave the way for the Vertigo line of comics, thus ensuring horror still has a home in the now incredibly diverse world of modern comic books. The America of 1983 was a very different world to that of 1968 when Joe Orlando was handed the reins to the faltering *House of Mystery*. The powers that be of that time may not have realised it, but DC were sorely in need of his vision. Without him and the keen young talent he recruited, the company may have forever languished in the shadow of that great champion of the silver age Marvel Comics. It is a frightening prospect, but if Joe Orlando had not persevered there may never have been a bronze age of horror and mystery comics.

The final issues from the DC Bronze Age of Horror and Mystery; Ghosts #67, The Witching Hour! #14, House of Mystery #192 and Phantom Stranger #21.

The Mammoth Book of Best HORROR COMICS

On the 24th January The Mammoth Book of Best Horror Comics edited by From the Tomb's own editor Peter Normanton finally crawled into the bookshops. Containing over 500 black and white pages of tales from the last seventy years of horror comics with an accompanying set of notes, this is definitely for you. Within you will find tales from Lou Cameron, Jack Katz, Joe Monks, Arthur Suydam, Mike Hoffman, James Fletcher, Stephen Sennitt Serena Valentino and Dave Elitchcock to name but a few. It can be found in the high street book and comic shops for £12.99 or it can be ordered from myself for £14 (£16 overseas) which includes postage and packing.



Issue # 1: 20 A5 Pages all in colour. An introduction to Skywald, pre-Code horror, 1970s Marvel terror, UK reprints. £6.00/$10.00

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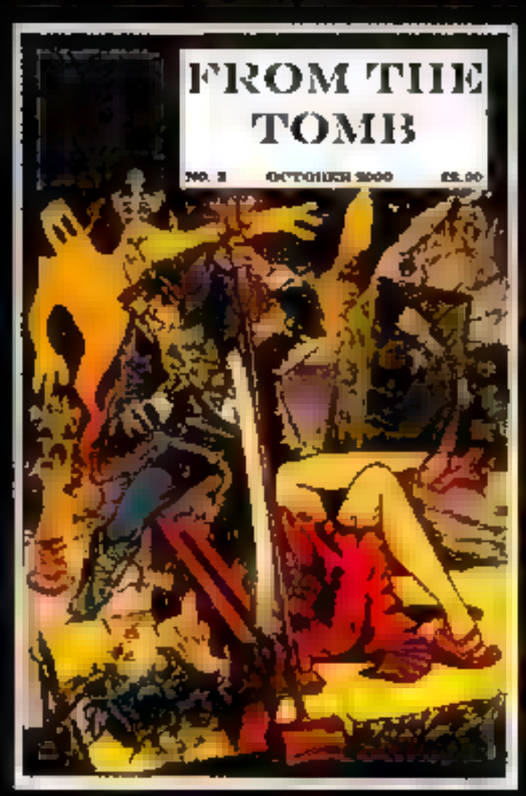

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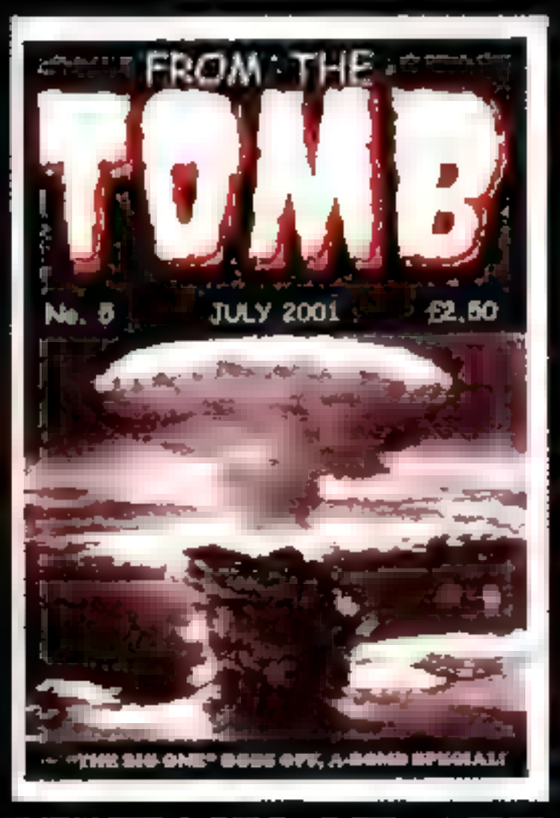

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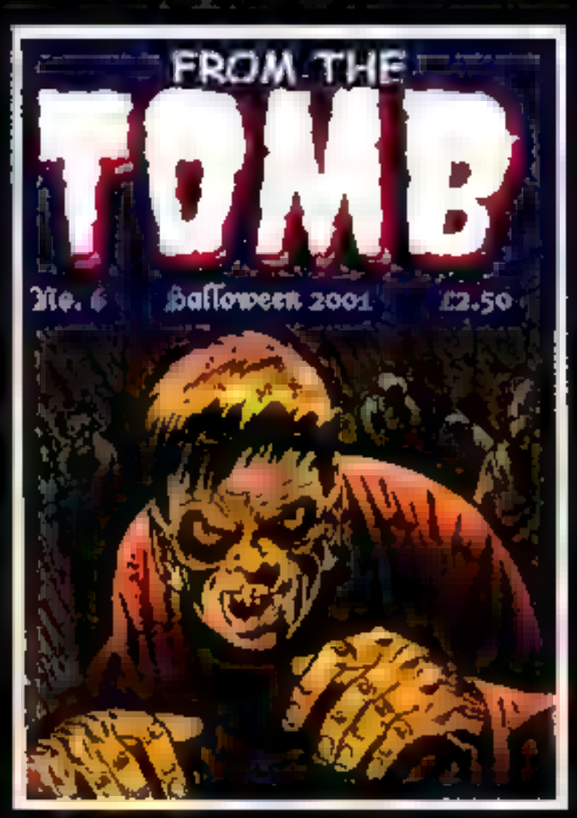

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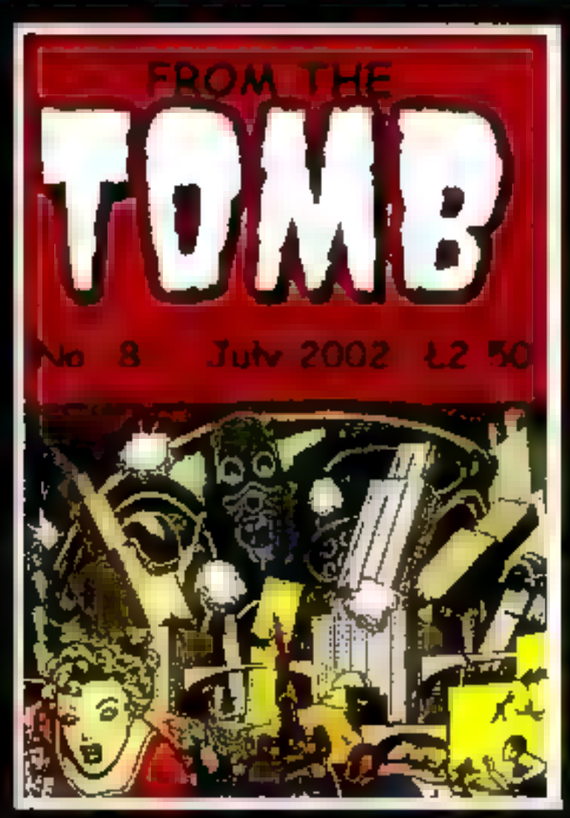

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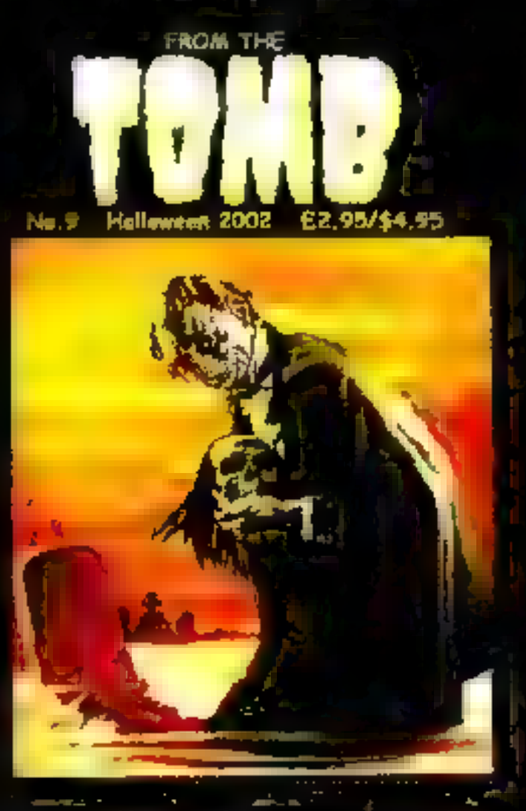

Issue #9: 40 pages, 12 in colour, Al Feldstein interview. First to be professionally printed. Lovecraft & Skywald, Charlton, pre-Code circus terror, Korean War Comics, BAC severed head covers £5.00/$12.00

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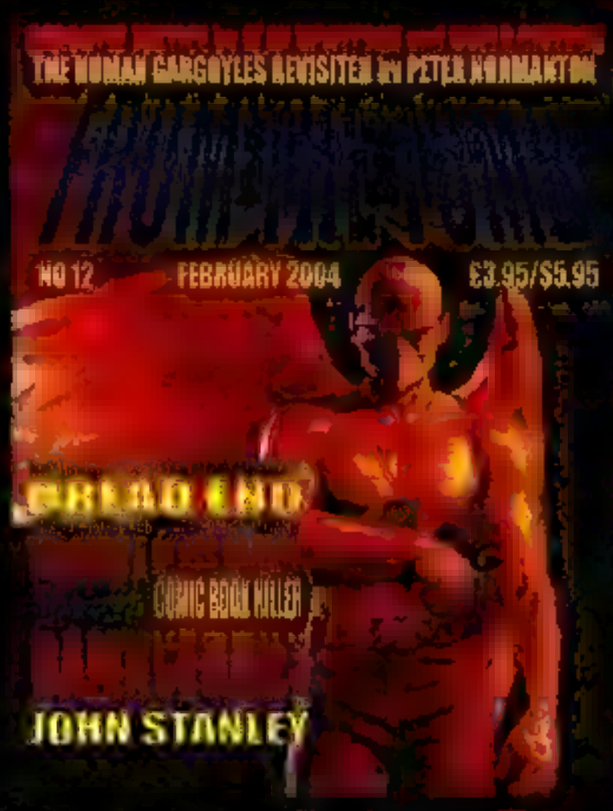

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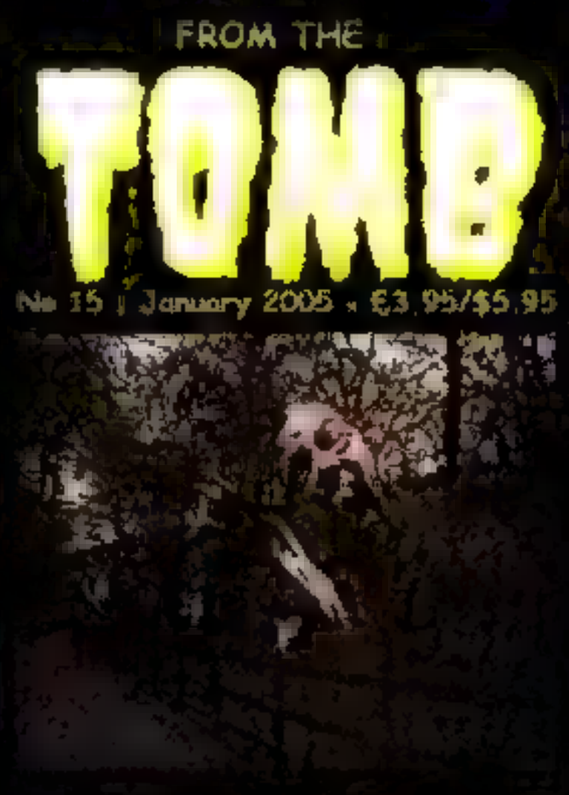

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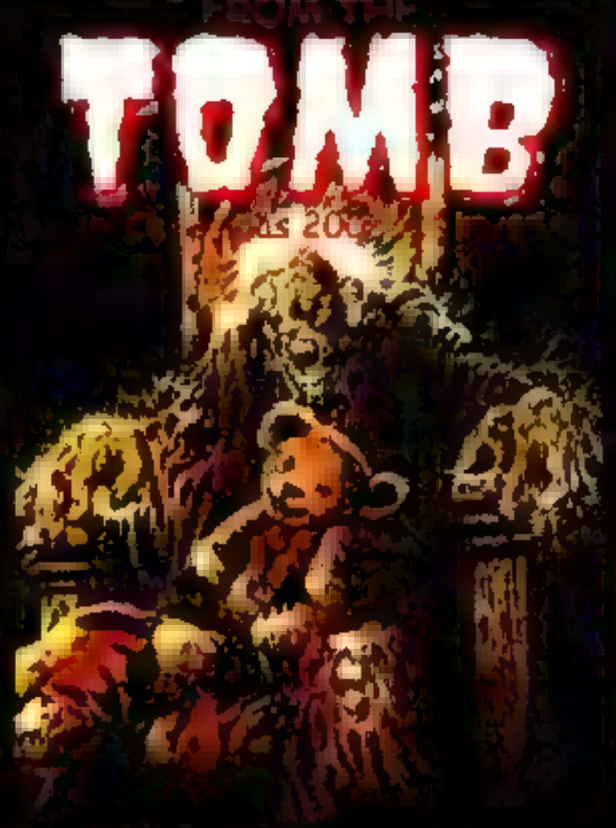

Issue 18: 60 pages 16 in colour, Christmas edition ACG horror, Dave Kendall interview, Warren & Skywald Christmas, Tom Sutton Alan Class Interview, Johnny Dynamite, BAC on Lucifer. £4.50/$11.00

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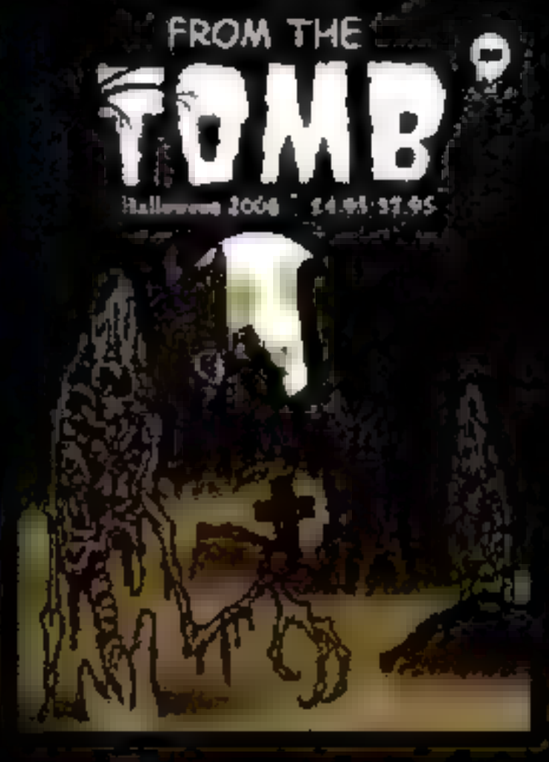

Issue 20: 72 pages, 20 in colour, Horror Comics Spotlight, Dracula in the 1950s B.K. Taylor, Skywald Monster mags of the 1950s and 60s,Thomas Ott, Jack Cole, Robert Aickman, BAC 1950s gender benders £4.95/$13.00

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FROM THE TOMB
BACK ISSUES

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Few up and coming comic book hopefuls could escape the miserly clutches of British born Victor Fox. This is Alvin's cover to Hunted #13, one of only two covers he produced for the com-

The name Alvin Carl Hollingsworth, as with so many of his contemporaries, is probably lost on this recent generation of comic book fans. Yet without his expressive technique and the experimentation of both him and his erstwhile colleagues, comic books may never have evolved to become what they are today. When I first saw his work rendered during the early 1950s, some fifteen years ago, I was immediately impressed by his distorted approach and wondered if there wasn't so much more to this fellow. His unrestrained style was swathed in an extraordinary flamboyance, seemingly at odds with the prevailing comic book mainstream. There was also a depth to his pages not always evident in the comics of the day, insisting you break from the continuity of the story to savour his artistry. Each was invariably a joy to behold; offering considerably more than the basic line work commonly associated with this period. He had a means of expression before a drawing board, placing him far beyond the vast majority of his contemporaries.

Born in 1928 in New York City, Alvin displayed an aptitude for art as early as four years of age. Eight years later, when most other kids were hooked on comic book heroes of the Golden Age, he was in the temporary employ of Holyoke Publishing working as an assistant on that now elusive title Catman Comics. His contribution may well have been inking backgrounds, erasing superfluous pencil lines and running errands, but he was already there in the employ of a comic book company. A year later he had his introduction to crime comics, although it is not entirely clear which tales of crime he was working on during the period 1941-2, again his role was more than likely to assist Holyoke's professionals of the day.

In his time as a comic book artist his pencils never graced the comic books published by the majors of the day, DC National, Timely, Fawcett and Quality. He did however make an appearance in Fiction House's vaunted Planet Comics in 1945 and found further request in the pages of Wings Comics before gaining regular assignments with Victor Fox. At Fox he would illustrate Bronze Man and Rulah the Jungle Goddess along with numerous gritty crime dramas for the steamy pages of Crimes by Women, Famous Crimes, Blue Beetle and Phantom Lady. The nuances in his layouts weren't entirely conducive to the superhero fare of those giants DC National, Timely, Fawcett and Quality. They did work to great effect in the crime books and as we shall soon see in the horror boom that became the scourge of the North American continent in the wake of 1951.

Victor Fox will never be celebrated as the entrepreneur who encouraged high paying page rates, far from it. Some artists may well have felt this was all they were worth, losing sight of the potential that lay in their boxes of pencils and drawing pens; thankfully this was not the case with Alvin. He sought work with the pulp publisher of the day, Avon. In terms of production Sol Cohen and Avon also had a dubious reputation for being notoriously cheap. If you don't believe me just take a closer look at some of the work in their titles. While they may demand substantial prices; once you get past the work of E. R. Kinstler, Wallace Wood, Joe Orlando and Joe Kubert, there really is not a great deal to shout about. However some artists were in receipt of more acceptable pay cheques and Alvin seemed to get a long very well with Sol Cohen. As a result he secured frequent assignments, which in the horror enthusiast's eyes probably saved Avon as a publisher of pre-Code terror. Without his contributions to Eerie and Witchcraft and their intriguing stream of one-off titles Avon may well have fallen to become a hopelessly inferior contributor to this dark phenomenon. Such was his relationship with Sol, Alvin was given the opportunity to produce some of their title's covers. As can be seen in these pages there is an appreciable boldness to his approach, relying very little on acute detail, as was often seen on the covers to EC's and Atlas's line of comics. These covers have an instantaneous impact, conveying a mood of extricable terror, one that would have seen them prosper when sat alongside the other titles on the news stands.

Crime Mysteries #2 couldn't make its mind up whether it wanted to enjoy a life of crime or become a horror comic. Alongside it sits the distorted depravity introducing Beware #8.

During the latter years of the 1940s, while struggling with the miserable page rates offered by Fox and Avon, Alvin became involved with a union seeking to protect the interests of workers across the comic book industry. Initially their focus centred on the appalling rates of pay endured by the writers of these tales. However it wasn't only the writers who were joining this new found union, artists such as Joe Kubert were also attending meetings, thus broadening its perspective in the pursuit of safeguarding the interests of all employees within the industry. Seemingly as a consequence of his affiliation with the union, Alvin spoke out as one of the artists now finding it difficult to obtain work. According to Joe Kubert the problem fundamental to the union's failure lay with those artists already in receipt of work not wanting to jeopardise their relationship with the editors upon which they had to rely. The union itself was also unable to secure work for those creators striving to acquire an adequate supply at a fair rate of pay. This wouldn't be the last time Alvin Hollingsworth was observed to challenge the ill wind that plagued

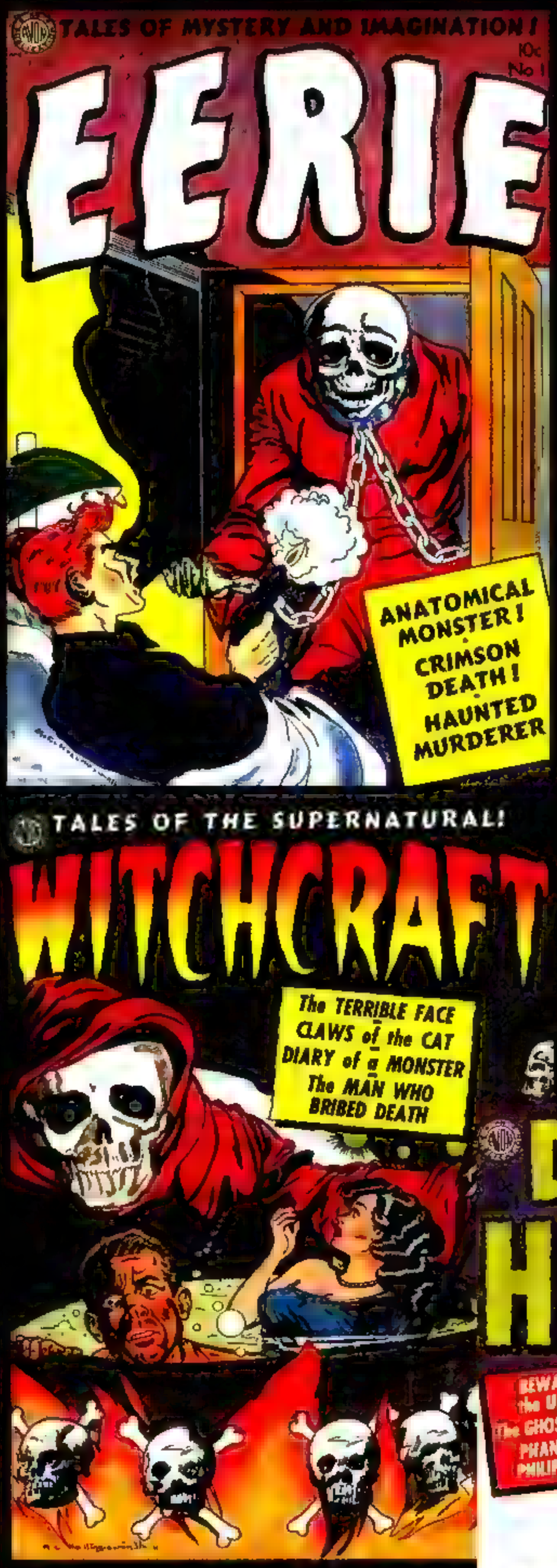
HOLLINGSWORTH DIARY OF HORROR

the American continent.

As the year 1951 drew to a close an abundance of work now came his way. A new group of publishers had arrived on the scene, Story and Master, who it was later revealed had an unusually close association. Both were keen to exploit the latest comic book sensation, horror of the nastiest kind. Mysterious Adventures and Dark Mysteries have gone on to acquire a notoriety of their own, making them some of the most collectible comic books of the period. Back then however they were second string titles, ranking way behind the polished product flowing from the craftsmen at EC along with the likes of Harvey and Atlas. They could however boast a fine crop of artists, among them Lou Cameron, Wally Wood, Myron Fass, Doug Wildey, Jay Disbrow and of course A. C. Hollingsworth. Their exploitative premise allowed him the means with which to experiment with the vagaries inherent to his own style. It may not have been as polished as the work pouring from the brush strokes of Ghastly Graham Ingels and Bill Everett, but it offered a grisly uncompromising horror enveloped in a dimension unique unto itself.

Further assignments were to come from Comic Media. Their bizarre approach to comic publishing placed him in the pages of their romance title All True Romance, but they couldn't resist finding him a slot in Horrific 4. Trojan and Rilrage would also find a home for his strange talent offering him interior stories and covers principally on Crime Mysteries and Beware. As with the covers he illustrated for Avon, these were also devoid of the detail found in his interior line work. They resounded with a garish impact, guaranteed to get them noticed by potential readers, unashamed in their embrace of the dark mood of the day.

Still only in his early twenties more work continued to come his way, all of it of course supplied by those smaller companies that had appeared during the recent boom. Stanley P Morse couldn't resist drafting him in for Mister Mystery 13-15. Star, Toby, Premier and Charlton would also find him even more pages to fill. Would it ever end? Well of course it did. The Comics Code brought an end to this steady stream of work, putting out of business virtually all of the publishers seen to jump on the horror comics' bandwagon only a few years before. Some were only fly by night set-ups and try as they could, it was never going to be possible for them to survive. Many artists now found themselves out of work. Alvin battled on, acquiring commissions as a magazine illustrator, some of it emanating from Myron Fass.



LIKE A BLOW IN THE FACE, THE VERY WORDS OF MY SHOCK YOU TO NUMBNESS...
I'LL CLAIM THIS FOR EUREKA MINING CO.!
DON'T BE RIDICULOUS, MY! IT'S MY IDEA! EUREKA HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH IT!
YOU BURN UP INSIDE AT MY'S SENSE OF DUTY--BUT YOU SET OUT TO EXPLORE FURTHER.
THANKS, JACK, BUT THIS GOES TO EUREKA!
THAT'S WHAT YOU THINK!
LOOK AT THIS CRUDE ROCK ANCHOR!
IT'S QUITE CLEAR THAT MY IS STUBBORN, YOU'RE GOING TO LOSE THIS CHANCE WHEN IT'S IN GRASP, WHY NOT AN ACCIDENT?
THIS WITH ANYONE--NOT EVEN MY ALONE!
TO MAKE DOUBLY SURE YOU PLUNGE YOUR PRECIOUS KNIFE DEEP DEEP INTO THE SOFT FLESH OF HIS BACK AND WATCH HIS TRUSSED UP BODY TIP OUT OF THE BOAT..
NOW IT'S ALL SETTLED!
ARRRGH...

Thankfully comic books were not his only source of work. As early as 1951 he was inking the occasional Spirit daily and two years later he was immersed in his own comic strip, nationally syndicated by the Associated Press in one hundred and forty newspapers. Scorchy Smith combined high adventure with science fiction. Kandy and Martin Keel provided a further outlet for his prolific talent during the same period, again going out to the newspaper comic supplements. For any comic book artist with a desire for success in the 1950s this was always considered the nadir of their achievement; their pencils and inks enjoyed across the length and breadth of the entire country.

Success in world of the syndicated strip still was not able to satiate his ever-growing artistic ambition. He left this potentially lucrative profession to enter the world of fine art. Having graduated from the High School of Music and Art in New York City, apparently having been in the same class as Joe Kubert, he later went on to graduate with a Fine Arts degree from City College New York. In terms of their subject matter his paintings revealed themselves to be very much contemporary. His canvases recorded the Civil Rights Movement, women's struggles, spiritual concepts, jazz and city life, a far cry from the dark sensationalism of the comic books. Even his paintings of literary subjects such as Don Quixote reflected a quest from freedom and self-determination, a theme close to heart of many of his African-American contemporaries.

Through his art he became a spokesman for the Civil Rights Movement and along with Romare Bearden, Hale Woodruff, Emma Amos, Reginald Gammon and Richard Mayhew was named among the founder members of Spiral in 1963, a collective of a dozen African American artists. They debated the necessity for a black aesthetic and true to the idea of a spiral sought to direct their and ideas outwards and upwards. Their first and only exhibition followed in 1964 entitled "Black and White" rather than the originally conceived "Mississippi 1964", to call attention to the murder of Core workers in Mississippi. Certain members of the collective felt this was too political and not entirely keeping with their craft. The exhibition at the Christopher Street Galley in New York also included work by non-members. Alvin was later invited by NBC to tour the East Coat, lecturing and demonstrating his art before hosting the ten part "You're Part of Art" for television. Books on acrylic painting and the 48 page colour "I'd Like the Goo-gen heim" telling of a young boy's exciting trip to the Guggenheim art museum in New York ensued.

The kid from Catman Comics was now a respected figure in the art world. His expressionist works would hang in the Smithsonian and by 1980 he was a full Professor of Art at Hostos Community College of the City University of New York. He retired in 1998 two years before he passed away. Alvin is a true testament to the endeavour of the creative spirit. He worked hard from an early age, applying himself to his craft and learning with each new experience. When faced with adversity he toiled all the harder, yet remained true to his art. He never made the big companies as a comic book pro, but the lesser outfits for which he worked, allowed him to learn and experiment with his style and in the long run were probably of far greater value than the binding house styles of the more successful publishers.

The shocking covers to Eerie #11, Witchcraft #4 and the one-off Avon title Diary of Horror, which certainly got their message across. Alvin's internal pages exhibit substantially more detail' "The Skeleton's Revenge" from Dark Mysteries #14, "The Man Who Bribed Death" published in Witchcraft #6 and finally Dark Mysteries #7's "The Terror of the Killer Plant". The tale "Time to Die" first appeared in the now rare Dark Mysteries #16. This is why Alvin managed to receive so much work at the height of the boom in horror comics.

I'D SPLIT IT ONLY WITH YOU!
AND WHY SHOULD I?
YOU FEEL A SENSE OF POWER AND ELATION AS YOU COME TO YOUR DECISION--GET RID OF JACK!
STOP--JACK! YOU--YOU'RE MAD! LET ME GO!
HA, HA, HA! IN A MOMENT, MY!

The Man Who Bribed DEATH
I WANT YOU, ROBERT AVERY! YOUR TIME IS UP!
NO! LET ME LIVE A LITTLE LONGER - I'LL FIND A WAY TO PAY YOU!
I SAW HIM FIRST IN THE GREY MISTS OF LONDON, THIS MAN WHOSE FACE WAS A SKULL! HE PUT HIS BONY HAND ON MINE AND SAID "I AM DEATH"--BUT I HAD AN ANSWER FOR HIM I BECAME THE MAN WHO BRIBED DEATH!
I AM ROBERT AVERY, FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT FOR THE NEW YORK BANNER. I WAS CROSSING TRAFALGAR SQUARE ON A SPRING NIGHT, WHEN I SAW HIM THERE, IN THE MIST..
GOOD EVENING ROBERT I HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU!

THE TERROR OF THE KILLER PLANT
OH NO! THIS PLANT IS KILLING ME.... STOP IT!
MIX TOGETHER AN OBSESSED SCIENTIST, A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN AND A KILLER IN THE NIGHT... THE RESULT?... DEATH! OUR TALE WILL FILL YOU WITH HORROR AND FEAR AS WE JOURNEY TO THE LAND OF THE SUPERNATURAL WHERE YOU WILL MEET... THE PLANT THAT KILLS!
OUR STORY OPENS AT THE NEWTON SCIENTIFIC FOUNDATION... A SPECIAL MEETING HAS BEEN CALLED...
DR PARKER THIS MEETING WAS CALLED BECAUSE THE FOUNDATION HAS RECEIVED SOME RATHER SPECTACULAR REPORTS ON THE EXPERIMENT YOU'VE BEEN WORKING ON
YES, DR JOHNSTON!

STOP AWHILE, HORROR-SEEKERS, AND READ THIS TALE YET TO BE TOLD- 'TWILL MAKE YOU SHUDDER- AND PERHAPS WEEP, AND PERHAPS TO WONDER HOW YOU CAN BE GLAD FOR SOMEONE THAT IT IS HIS....
TIME to DIE
THIS MUST BE A DREAM!
FATHER, FATHER! HELP ME!
YOU BRAT!
I'M COMING, MY SON, NOW'S YOUR TIME, MY TIMMY!
HOW CAN A MAN FACE DEATH, KNOWING HE MUST LEAVE ALL ALONE A YOUNG, DEARLY-LOVED SON? DICK FROHMAN KNEW HE MUST DIE - SOON. TIME WAS OF THE ESSENCE TO MAKE SOME ARRANGEMENTS FOR TIMMY'S CARE AND UP-BRINGING. THE PAIN OF SEPARATION IS A KEEN, BITTER ONE - BUT ONLY AFTER DEATH DID THEY BOTH FIND PEACE.

OVER THE HAPPY COMPANIONSHIP OF FATHER AND SON, HUNG A HEAVY PALL. THE BLACK WINGS OF A SHADOWY FIGURE CHILLED THE HEART OF DICK FROHMAN AS HE TENDERLY WATCHED HIS TIMMY...
GEE, DAD, THESE ELECTRIC TRAINS ARE SWELL. THANKS!
YOU DESERVE THEM, TIMMY. BOY.

EACH GOODNIGHT WAS TO THE FATHER A FRIGHTENING SEPARATION FROM HIS MOTHERLESS BOY.
SEE YOU IN THE MORNING, DADDY.
HAPPY DREAMS, TIM. (IF I ONLY MAY HAVE A FEW MORE DAYS.)

THE OMINOUS WORDS OF THE DOCTOR- ONLY YESTERDAY GIVING HIM HIS DEATH SENTENCE, HAMMERED ON DICK'S BRAIN AS THE MINUTES TICKED BY.
I MUST BE HONEST WITH YOU. YOU WILL DIE IN A FEW DAYS./
BUT I MUST LIVE! WHO WILL TAKE CARE OF TIMMY?
NEXT DAY, HIS STORY TOLD TO CHARLES CROCKER, THE BOY'S UNCLE, A WEIGHT LIFTED FROM DICK'S MIND AS CHARLES SEEMED A HELPFUL FRIEND. BUT CHARLES THOUGHT DICK A LITTLE CRACKED..
AND I'LL HAVE MY INSURANCE TURNED OVER TO YOU FOR THE CARE OF TIMMY. PROMISE ME YOU'LL BE GOOD TO HIM, CHARLES!
DON'T WORRY ABOUT THAT MY FRIEND, I'LL GIVE TIMMY EVERY CARE AND AFFECTION./
YOU SEE, CHARLES, I KNOW I WILL BE WATCHING TIMMY EVEN IF I'M DEAD. I'LL KNOW IF HE IS UNHAPPY AND I'LL COME FOR HIM!
IF SOMEONE SAID THAT TO YOU - WOULD YOU THINK HE WAS CRACKED TOO?
THE NEXT FEW DAYS DICK JUST MARKED TIME, BUT DICK SAVORED EVERY JOY HE COULD IN HIS COMPANIONSHIP WITH TIMMY...
GEE, DAD, THAT WAS A SWELL PITCH!
YOU'RE A GREAT LITTLE CATCHER, TIMMY./
THE PAIN HIT - SUDDENLY, STUNNINGLY...
DADDY, DADDY! WHAT IS IT?
H-E-L-P M-E... I-N-S-I-D-E. I'-L-L T-E-L-L Y-O-U!
SLOWLY, PAINFULLY, DICK TOLD TIM THAT HE MUST DIE - BUT THAT HIS GOOD FRIEND, CHARLES CROCKER WOULD BE A FATHER TO HIM...
NO, NO! I WANT TO GO WITH YOU! I WANT TO DIE TOO!
YOURS IS NOT THE TIME TO DIE, TIMMY!
AND THEN THE HOUR OF DOOM STRUCK!
MY BOY - YOUR FATHER'S DEAD. HE WOULD WANT YOU TO BE BRAVE!
I WANT TO GO WITH HIM.. PLEASE LET ME!
2

STEP BY STEP, ALL THE REGULAR PROCEEDINGS TO MAKE DEATH FINAL, IRREVOCABLE, FOLLOWED IN DUE COURSE - CLANGING LIKE A BELL IN THE EARS OF THE UNHAPPY BOY...

MR. CROCKER, HERE'S THE DEATH CERTIFICATE FOR DICK!

YES, DR. QUIGLEY!

ON HIS WAY TO HIS LAST RESTING PLACE, DICK'S BODY STOPPED AT THE MORTICIAN FOR EMBALMING AND DRAINING OF HIS BLOOD...

AT THE CHURCH, THE TRAGIC SIGHT OF A GRIEF STRICKEN BOY UNWILLING TO LET HIS FATHER GO, AFFLICTED THE WEEPING EYES OF ALL...

I WANT TO GO WITH YOU, DADDY! TAKE ME, *PLEASE!*

WAS IT THE IMAGINATION OF AN OVERWROUGHT BOY THAT HEARD HIS FATHER'S ANSWER?...

NO, TIMMY, IT IS NOT TIME FOR YOU TO DIE!

NO MORE TEARS, TIMMY. IT'S FINISHED AND YOUR FATHER WILL NEVER COME BACK. I'LL TAKE CARE OF YOU NOW!

YES, CHARLES!

RICHARD FROHMAN

BUT SOON AFTER THE INSURANCE WAS COLLECTED, CHARLES PROCEEDED TO TAKE CARE OF TIMMY, *BUT* IN HIS OWN WAY...

THERE ARE *MORE* BARRELS OF ASHES TO TAKE OUT, TIM. HURRY ALONG!

YES, YES, MR. CROCKER!

THIS WAS NOT THE KIND OF "FATHER'S CARE" TIMMY HAD KNOWN - THIS WAS NOT DICK'S KIND OF LOVE AND TENDERNESS...

DADDY, DADDY, WHY DIDN'T YOU TAKE ME WITH YOU?

WHAT ARE YOU MUMBLING ABOUT? FINISH UP AND GO TO BED, TIM!

MEETING TOMORROW!

LATE AT NIGHT THERE WERE SUDDEN SCREAMS FROM UP IN TIMMY'S ROOM...
THAT BRAT'S HAVING NIGHTMARE'S AGAIN... I'LL FIX HIM!
EEEEEE
BE
5¢
5¢ GLOBE 5
AGAIN?
POLICE CRACK
SO CHARLES CROCKER "FIXED" TIMMY AS THE HELPLESS TORTURED CHILD CRINGED IN AGONY. BUT HOW FAR CAN A CHILD'S CRIES BE HEARD, EVEN UNTO THE GRAVE?
GET IT THROUGH YOUR HEAD. YOUR FATHER'S DEAD! THE DEAD CAN'T HEAR!
DADDY, DADDY! I WANT YOU!
BUT CAN'T THEY? AT THE GRAVEYARD, A SERIES OF STRANGE, UNBELIEVABLE EVENTS TOOK PLACE - THAT WERE TALKED ABOUT FOR YEARS TO COME...
I HEAR YOU, TIMMY. I'LL GET MY BODY AND COME...
RICHARD FREEMAN
R.I.P.
THE EERIE GHOST THAT CONFRONTED THE GOGGLE-EYED GRAVE DIGGER, SPEAKING IN HOLLOW TONES THAT FROZE HIS BLOOD, LOOKED LIKE THE YOUNG FATHER THAT HE BURIED A FEW DAYS AGO...
D-I-G U-P M-Y G-R-A-V-E .. R-E-L-E-A-S-E M-Y B-O-D-Y...
Y-YES.. S..SURE...
RELEASED FROM THE GRAVE, THE DECAYED BODY OF DICK CLIMBED OUT AND CARRIED BY THE GHOST, HURRIED TOWARD A GOAL...
I'M .. OVERWORKED.. THIS CAN'T BE HAPPENING..
W-O-N-'T B-E L-O-N-G N-O-W, T-H-M-M-Y. B-O-Y!
STEP BY STEP, DICK'S CORPSE PROCEEDED BACKWARD WITH BODY, FROM THE GRAVE TO THE MORTICIAN...
R-E-S-T-O-R-E M-Y B-L-O-O-D T-O M-Y V-E-I-N-S...
Y-YES!
THE STUNNED AND QUAKING MORTICIAN OBEYED HIS STRANGE VISITOR, INJECTING BLOOD BACK INTO HIS VEINS...
4

THEN, INEXORABLY, DICK'S BLOODED CORPSE PLODED HIS WAY TO THE HOUSE OF CHARLES WHERE THE BEATEN BOY WHO WAS HIS SON, TIMMY, LAY BEATEN ON THE FLOOR...

WHIMPERING BRAT! TAKE THAT!.. AND THAT! AND... UGH! D-DICK.. IT CA'NT BE!

CONFRONTED BY THE RETURNED DEAD, CHARLES BRAVADO EBBED RAPIDLY AS HE COWERED BEFORE A THING FROM THE UNKNOWN!

I-I WAS JUST DISCIPLINING THE BOY.

FROM BEYOND THE GRAVE, A TORTURED SPIRIT HAD DEFIED ALL THE LAWS OF NATURE, RETURNING FROM IT'S RESTING PLACE OF ETERNAL PEACE TO BRING THE SAME PEACE TO A LITTLE BOY...

A-N-D N-O-W... W-H-E-R-E'S M-Y T-I-M-M-Y?

TIMMY! TIMMY! NOW IS YOUR TIME TO COME WITH ME! I'VE COME TO TAKE YOU!

SOB ... DADDY! IN YOU HEARD ME!

AND ANOTHER MIRACLE TOOK PLACE, TIMMY-HEARD-HIS-FATHER!

DADDY, DADDY... I'M SO HAPPY YOU'VE COME FOR ME!

IT WAS NIGHT AND A COLD WIND BLEW, AS A MAN AND BOY WALKED AFFECTIONATELY TOGETHER IN THE DIRECTION OF THE CEMETERY...

ER 1953

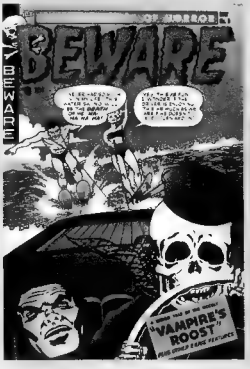
A FATHER - EVEN A DEAD FATHER - CAN HEAR HIS LITTLE SON CALL HIM!

THE END

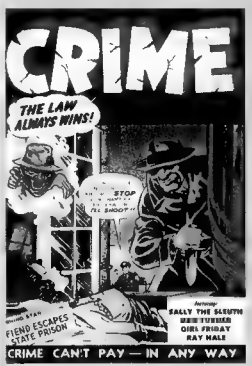
Alvin Carl Hollingsworth: Comic Art Index

by Frank Motler

Title	(publ)	No	Date	cover	Story	Pages
All True Romance	(Comic Media)	10	Mar-53	cover	"One Mistake"	7
All True Romance	(Comic Media)	12	Jly-53		"Circus Freak"	6
Almanac Of Crime	(Fox)	nn(2)	1950		illustrated splash page (inside cover)	1
Attack (2)	(Trojan)	5	Sep-53		"Operation: Phonograph!"	6
Battle Attack	(Stanmor)	3	Feb-55		"A G.I.'s Equipment" (from: Battle Cry #9)	5
Battle Cry	(Stanmor)	9	OctNov-53		"A G.I.'s Equipment"	5
Beware	(Trojan)	16(2)	Jly-53		"Kill No More!"	6
Beware	(Trojan)	8	Mar-54	cover		
Beware	(Trojan)	9	May-54	cover	"The Ghost of Fire!"	6
Blue Beetle	(Fox)	42	JulyAug-46		"Bronze Man [untitled]"	7
Blue Beetle	(Fox)	44	SeptOct-46		"Bronze Man: Statue of Doom"	8
Captain Aero Comics	(Holyoke)	23	Aug-45		"Blimp Blitz"	4
Catholic Comics	(Catholic)	12	Jun-47		"Wonders of Sea Life"	3
City Of The Living Dead	(Avon)	1	1952	cover	"City Of The Living Dead" (lead story)	7
Contact Comics	(Aviation Press)	10	Jan-46		"D.D.T.'s"	2
Contact Comics	(Aviation Press)	7	Jly-45		"Eyes of the Army"	4
Contact Comics	(Aviation Press)	5	Mar-45		"Robot Plane"	4
Crime Incorporated	(Fox)	3	Aug-51		"Escape From The Rock" (unsigned)	10
Crime Mysteries	(Ribage)	2	Jly-52	cover	(unsigned)	
Crime Mysteries	(Ribage)	10	Nov-53		"Frozen Fear!"	6
Crime Mysteries	(Ribage)	11	Jan-54		"Murder— and You Die!"	6
Crime Mysteries	(Ribage)	12	Mar-54	cover	"The Television Kill" (unsigned)	7
Crime Mysteries	(Ribage)	13	May-54	cover	"Turnabout!" (unsigned)	6
Crime Mysteries	(Ribage)	14	Jly-54	cover	"Never Cross A Gypsy's Palm" (unsigned)	6
Crime Mysteries	(Ribage)	15	Sep-54		"Death in Room 13" (unsigned)	5
Crime Smashers	(Trojan)	11	Jly-53	cover	(unsigned)	
Crimes By Women	(Fox)	2	Aug-48		"The Midget Murderer"	1
Crimes By Women	(Fox)	12	Apr-49		"The High Wire Killer" (unsigned)	8 2/3
Dagar	(Fox)	22	Feb-49		"Felony Flies"	1
Danger	(Charlton)	14	Oct-55		"Speed Demon" (war story)" (unsigned)	5
Dark Mysteries	(Master)	7	JunJly-52		"The Terror of the Killer Plant"	7
Dark Mysteries	(Master)	8	AugSep-52		"Terror Comes in Threes"	7
Dark Mysteries	(Master)	9	OctNov-52		"Witches Feast at Dawn"	7
Dark Mysteries	(Master)	10	JanFeb-53		"The Note of Death"	7
Dark Mysteries	(Master)	11	Apr-53		"Terror Of the Hotrod"	6 2/3
Dark Mysteries	(Master)	12	Jun-53		"The Wish of Doom"	6
Dark Mysteries	(Master)	13	Aug-53		"The Curse of the Shooting Star!"	6
Dark Mysteries	(Master)	14	Oct-53		"The Skeleton's Revenge!" (EC swipes)	7
Dark Mysteries	(Master)	17	Apr-54		"Terror of the Man-Ape!"	6
Dark Mysteries	(Master)	15	Dec-53		"Horror of the Ghostly Pilot!"	7
Dark Mysteries	(Master)	16	Feb-54		"Time to Die & Charles Ferguson"	5
Dark Mysteries	(Master)	18	Jun-54		"Some Die Twice" (3-D effect splash)	6
Dark Mysteries	(Master)	19	Aug-54		"Never To Die!" (unsigned)	6
Dark Mysteries	(Master)	20	Oct-54		"The Clutch of the Devil Fish!" (unsigned)	7
Dark Mysteries	(Master)	21	Dec-54		"The Marked Man" (unsigned)	6
Dark Mysteries	(Merit)	23	May-55		"Don't Box Me In"	5 2/3
Diary Of Horror	(Avon)	1	Dec-52	cover	"The Phantom of Philip Hawks"	6
Eerie	(Avon)	9	OctNov-52		"The Phantom Hitch-Hiker"	5



Eerie	(Avon)	9	OctNov-52		"Princess of the Subway"	6
Eerie	(Avon)	11	Apr-53	cover	"Anatomical Monster"	7
Famous Crimes	(Fox)	1	Jun-48		"The Bloodless Corpse"	1
Famous Crimes	(Fox)	17	May-50		"The Winging Walter"	10
Fight Against Crime	(Story)	3	Sep-51		"Prison Break + Doublecross = Death"	7
Fight Against Crime	(Story)	4	Nov-51		"The Witness is Death!"	7
Fight Against Crime	(Story)	5	Jan-52		"Death Laughs Last!"	7
Fight Against Crime	(Story)	6	Mar-52		"Crime at the Graveyard"	7
Fight Against Crime	(Story)	7	May-52		"Death Needs No Alibi"	7
Fight Against Crime	(Story)	9	Sep-52		"Corpse in the Ice"	5
Fight Against Crime	(Story)	10	Nov-52		"The Con's Revenge"	7
Fight Against Crime	(Story)	13	May-53		"The Bloodless Killer" (Mysterious Adventures Comics, splash)	7
Fight Against The Guilty	(Story)	23	Mar-55		"The Come On" (from: Police Against Crime #1)	6
Fight Comics	(Fiction House)	60	Feb-49		"Hooks Devlin [Guard these jewels with your life!]"	6
Fightin' Navy	(Charlton)	74	Jan-56		"Operation: Redwing" (unsigned)	7
Fightin' Navy	(Charlton)	74	Jan-56		"The Giant Killers!" (unsigned)	5
Fightin' Navy	(Charlton)	74	Jan-56		"Frightened Hero!" (unsigned)	5
Fightin' Navy	(Charlton)	74	Jan-56		"Secret Weapon!" (UFO story, unsigned)	5
Fighting War Stories	(Mens)	3	DecJan-53		"The Death of the Red Vulture"	7
Frank Buck	(Fox)	71(2)	Jly-50		"Captain Henry Morgan"	1
Ghostly Weird Tales	(Star)	121	Mar-54		"Death and the Devil"	1
Great Comics	(Novack)	1	1945		"The Secret of the Mexican Doll ?"	8
Headline Comics	(Prize)	30	JunJly-48		"Pistol-Packin' Playgirl"	5
Horrific	(Comic Media)	4	Mar-53		"Ring Of Death"	6
Hunted	(Fox)	13(1)	Jly-50	cover	(unsigned)	
Indian Fighter	(Youthful)	5	Jan-52		"Devil of the Desert"	7
Jo-Jo Comics	(Fox)	7(a)	Jly-47		"Bronze Man [untitled]"	6
Jo-Jo Comics	(Fox)	7(a)	Jly-47		"Purple Tigress [untitled]"	10
Jo-Jo Comics	(Fox)	21	Nov-48		*information required*	?
Juke Box Comics	(Famous Funnies)	1	1948		"Duke Ellington"	3
Juke Box Comics	(Famous Funnies)	2	1948		"Lena Horne"	3
Jungle-Jo Comics	(Fox)	2	Jly-50	cover	(unsigned)	
March Of Crime	(Fox)	7	Jly-50		"Leonard Scarnici Psychopathic Killer-He Killed Because He Loved It"	9
Martin Kane Private Eye	(Fox)	2	Aug-50		"Case Number 1156-The Case Of the Choppers"	3
Mask Of Dr.Fu Manchu	(Avon)	1	1951		"Flash Harper in Operation Blackout"	6
Mister Mystery	(Key)	13	Sep-53		"The Clock Maker	5
Mister Mystery	(Key)	15	Feb-54		"Nightmare	4
Murder Incorporated	(Fox)	5	Sep-48		"James Waybura Hall-The Arkansas Butcher"	10
Mysterious Adventures	(Story)	3	Aug-51		"The Manikins of Death" (unsigned)	7
Mysterious Adventures	(Story)	4	Oct-51		"The Horror of Van Mort!" (unsigned)	7
Mysterious Adventures	(Story)	5	Dec-51		"Ghouls Feast at Midnight"	7
Mysterious Adventures	(Story)	6	Feb-52		"Bride for the Dead"	7
Mysterious Adventures	(Story)	7	Apr-52		"The Secret of Sleed's Castle"	7
Mysterious Adventures	(Story)	12	Feb-53		"A Stony Death" (unknown & AC Hollingsworth)	7
Mysterious Adventures	(Story)	8	Jun-52		"Ghost With Two Faces"	7
Mysterious Stories	(Premier)	2	DecJan-55		"Evil Voices!"	6
Mysterious Stories	(Premier)	3	Apr-55		"Friends to the End!" (unsigned)	6
Mysterious Stories	(Premier)	4	Jun-55		"That's The Spirit!" (unsigned)	6
Night Of Mystery	(Avon)	1	1953	cover	(unsigned)	
Nuts!	(Premier)	1	Mar-54		"Scarface! & Sargent"	7
Phantom Lady	(Fox)	19	Aug-48		"The Crime Goddess"	1



Planet Comics	(Fiction House)	37	Jly-45		"Space Rangers: Behemoths of the Purple Void"	8
Police Against Crime	(Premier)	1	Apr-54		"The Come-On"	6
Police Against Crime	(Premier)	2	Jun-54		"Neighborhood Cop!"	6
Police Trap	(Mainline)	2	OctNov-54		"Gambler's End" (electric chair panel)	2
Rulah	(Fox)	18	Sep-48		"Jungle Fables [The Ruby of Tankor!]"	3
Saint Comics	(Avon)	4	1948		"Flash Harper in"Operation Blackout"	6
Saint Comics	(Avon)	6	1949		"The Saint"Hoppy Shows Initiative"	6
Scotland Yard	(Charlton)	1	Jun-55		"Bruno Gillers In The Swami's Last Seance" (unsigned)	9
Secret Diary of Eerie Adventures	(Avon)	nn	1953	cover	cover	
Secret Mysteries	(Ribage)	16	Nov-54		"The Death Look" (unsigned)	5
Secret Mysteries	(Merit)	17	Mar-55		"Sinister Santa Claus" (unsigned)	6
Shock Detective Cases	(Star)	20	Sep-52		"The Bloodless Corpse" (from: Famous Crimes #1)	1
Startling Terror Tales	(Star)	11	May-54		"The Bloodless Corpse" (from: Famous Crimes #1)	1
Strange Worlds	(Avon)	8	Aug-52		"The Thing on the Broken Balcony!"	5
Tales Of Horror	(Toby Press)	2	Sep-52		"The Hand of Jao Tze	8
Tales of Horror	(Toby Press)	2	Sep-52		"The Ripper's Return"	4
Unknown Man, The	(Avon)	nn	1951		"The Night Club Swindle ? (unsigned)	6
Western Outlaws	(Fox)	17	Sep-48		"Death And The Devil Pills"	1
Wings Comics	(Fiction House)	67	Mar-46		"Suicide Smith [The Jap-hunting days of Major Suicide Smith]"	6
Wings Comics	(Fiction House)	68	Apr-46		"Suicide Smith ["Madman of the skyways]"	7
Wings Comics	(Fiction House)	69	May-46		"Suicide Smith [La Prensa. Air Minister Fuente Out As Bribe Scandal Exposed]"	6
Wings Comics	(Fiction House)	70	Jun-46		"Suicide Smith [It's Like Riding An Atom Bomber]"	6
Wings Comics	(Fiction House)	105	Apr-49		"Suicide Smith [untitled]"	6
Wings Comics	(Fiction House)	106	Jun-49		"Suicide Smith [untitled]"	6
Wings Comics	(Fiction House)	107	Jly-49		"Suicide Smith: The Treasure of Aero Munda"	6
Wings Comics	(Fiction House)	108	Aug-49		"Suicide Smith [untitled]"	6
Wings Comics	(Fiction House)	109	Sep-49		"Suicide Smith [The Mine of the Seven Condors]"	6
Wings Comics	(Fiction House)	111	Spr-50		"Suicide Smith [untitled]"	6
Witchcraft	(Avon)	4	SeptOct-52	cover	"The Man Who Bribed Death"	7
Witchcraft	(Avon)	4	Jly-53	cover	"The Man Who Bribed Death" (Canadian reprint)	7
Witchcraft	(Avon)	5	DecJan-53		"Where Zombies Walk"	6
Witchcraft	(Avon)	5	Sep-53		"Where Zombies Walk!" (Canadian reprint)	6
Witchcraft	(Avon)	6	Mar-53	cover	"Mystery of the Moaning Statue!"	6
Youthful Romances	(Ribage)	17	May-53		"Strictly Business"	6
Youthful Romances (2)	(Ribage)	6	Nov-53		"Artist & Model" (signed & dated, 5/20/52)	6
Youthful Romances (2)	(Ribage)	7	Feb-54		"Case For Cupid" (unsigned)	6

Later Reprint Items:

Black Magic Comics (UK)	(ABC)	16	cNov-54	"The Bloodless Corpse" (b&w, from: Famous Crimes #1)	1
Black Magic Comics (UK)	(ABC)	13	c1953	"Princess of the Subway" (from: Eerie #9)	6
Black Magic Comics (UK)	(ABC)	13	c1953	"The Phantom Hitch Hiker" (from: Eerie #9)	5
Crime & Justice	(Charlton)	25	Jly-55	"Escape From The Rock" (from: Crime Incorporated #3) (unsigned)	10
Danger	(IW/Super)	10	c1963	"The Secret of the Mexican Doll" (from: Great Comics #1)	8
Doctor Fu Manchu	(IW/Super)	1	c1958	"Flash Harper in"Operation Blackout"(from: Mask of Doctor Fu Manchu)	6
Fantastic Tales	(IW/Super)	1	c1958	"City of the Living Dead" (from: City of the Living Dead #1)	8
Fightin' Navy (UK)	(L. Miller)	1	c1957	reprints all stories from: Fightin' Navy #74 (b&w, unsigned)	22
Ghostly Weird Stories (UK)	(ABC)	1	c1954	"Death and the Devil" (b&w, from: Ghostly Weird Tales #122)	1
Heap, The	(Skywald)	1	Sep-71	"Curse Of The Broken Balcony" (retitled. from: Strange Worlds #1)	5
Human Fly	(IW/Super)	1	c1958	"Statue of Doom" (from: Blue Beetle #44) ?	8
Human Fly	(IW/Super)	10	c1963	"The Adventure of the False Rajah" (from: Blue Beetle #46)	10
Mystery Tales	(IW/Super)	16	c1964	"The Hand of Jao Tze" (from: Tales of Horror #2)	8
Mystery Tales	(IW/Super)	16	c1964	"The Ripper's Return" (from: Tales of Horror #2)	4
Strange Mysteries	(IW/Super)	15	c1964	"Don't Box Me In" (in quotes. from: Dark Mysteries #23)	5 2/3
Voodoo (UK)	(L. Miller)	5	c1960	"The Phantom Hitch Hiker" (b&w, from: Eerie #9)	5
Voodoo (UK)	(L. Miller)	5	c1960	"Princess of the Subway" (b&w, from: Eerie #9)	6

Miscellaneous Magazine items:

Amazing Detective Cases (magazine)(Atlas)	v13#1	Mar-58	cartoon	1	
Bachelor (magazine)	(Atlas)	v3#4	Sep-58	cartoon	1
True Problems	(True Problems)	v1#1	Jun-56	"Girl on the Loose" (illustrated text story)	7

Notes:

1/ This completely original index lists all known comic book covers and stories illustrated by Alvin C. Hollingsworth (1928-2000). Covers are always one page & are not included in the page count. Overstreet's suggestion that Bride's Secrets #18 (*Ajax*, Apr-53) contains an Hollingsworth story is incorrect.

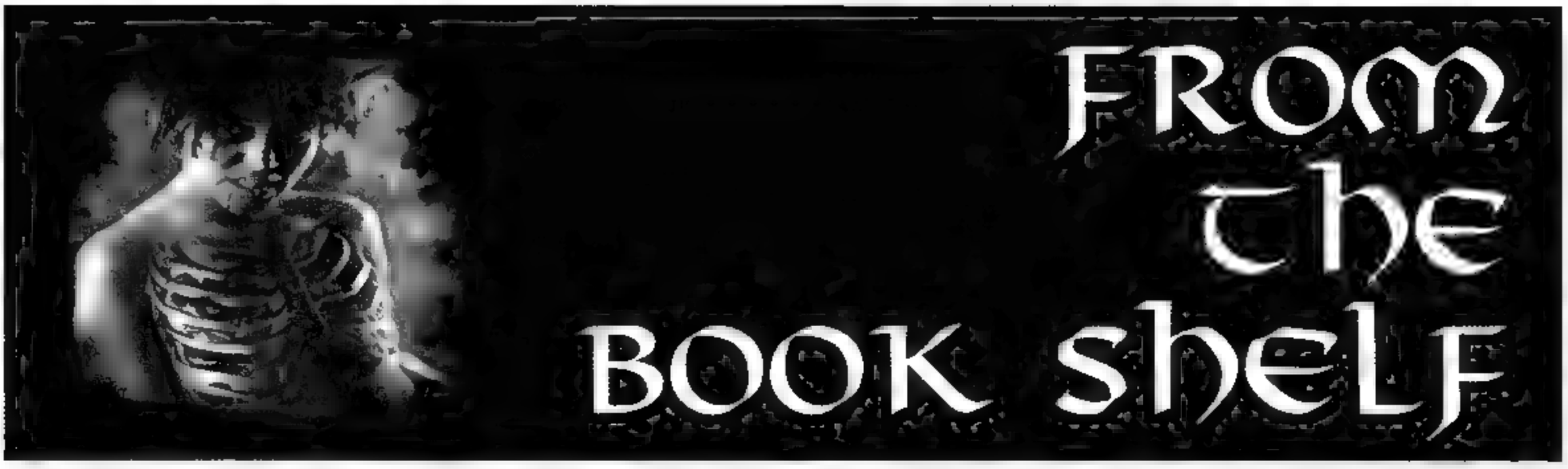
2/ It also lists the known reprints, of which, all UK items are in b&w. Post-code items are indicated by a star (*). IW items are not indicated, as they reprinted pre-code material, outside of the Comics Code.

3/ Not listed above, AC Hollingsworth also illustrated the following newspaper strips, between 1953 & 1855: Kandy *(Smith-Mann Syndicate)*, Marlin Keel (with George Shedd, *Post-Hall Syndicate)*, Scorchy Smith *(AP Newsfeatures/Associated Press)*. The ground-breaking, *Smith-Mann Syndicate* supplied newspaper strips exclusively for African American audiences, which ran in specialist regional newspapers, from 1950 on.

4/ The final items above are magazines, with True Problems containing a fully illustrated text story. There are likely to be many other cartoons in Atlas (Martin Goodman) and other magazines still to be discovered. After this, Hollingsworth left comics to pursue a career in fine art.

References
Grand Comic Book Database, <http://www.comics.org/>, *Worldwide Web.* 2007

All information researched and compiled by: *Frank Motler, England.* A Fatboy Production 15th September 2007



Postscripts 11 Summer 2007 £6 $12 (plus £2 $4 postage) PS Publishing, Grosvenor House, 1 New Road, Hornsea, East Yorkshire, HU18 1PG www.pspublishing.co.uk

Pete Crowther and his editor Nick Gevers had their work cut with his appearance of **Postscripts**. With the issue prior to this one having included contributions from the likes of Ramsey Campbell and Stephen King, this was potentially going to be an anticlimax. A long-standing reader of this quarterly anthology however would have known there was no need to worry. As would be expected, both Pete and Nick have succeeded in bringing together a collection of outstanding tales.

Tomislav Tikulin's splendid cover painting immediately arrests the attention, drawing the reader into a world of endless possibilities. Christopher Harman's tale "*Behind the Clouds: In Front of the Sun*", the tale accompanying Tomlav's rendition is the finale for this issue, and what a finale it proves to be. Christopher is a writer of formidable talent. His style so darkly evocative is garnished with an intrusive perception, which works to subtly intensify the ever-imposing tension. The northern locale of course piqued my attention; indeed my sense of trepidation was heightened, as his observations became more acutely familiar. Having watched my hometown fall into decline for nigh on two decades this tale did much to unsettle.

I am getting ahead of myself. The curtain raiser, Paul Di Filippo's editorial extolling the virtues of the net (it's not all porn thank God) has to be read. If you've spent any time sat alone in a room writing I am sure you will find a degree of accord with his words. Kealan Patrick Burke's "*Cobwebs*" follows This is such a precisely observed piece, unveiling a fate that awaits so many of us. "*State of Grace*" is only the second tale I can recall having read from the penmanship of David Barnett, yet in a short space of time he has already become a firm favourite. Hark this warning from the distanced consumer plagued world; our souls are surely forfeit. There's so much more in these 150 pages but sadly space does not permit. **Postscripts** heralds itself the "A-Z of Fantastic Fiction" and justifiably so.

Cinema Macabre edited by Mark Morris PS Publishing, Grosvenor House, 1 New Road, Hornsea, East Yorkshire, HU18 1PG www.pspublishing.co.uk

They say the simple ideas are invariably the best, **Cinema Macabre** is truly a case in point. Mark had the idea of bringing together fifty of the finest horror and fantasy creators and let them champion their favourite horror movies. From a string of conversations at the British Fantasy Convention in Walsall's Quality Hotel in 2004 came this fine collection of short essays.

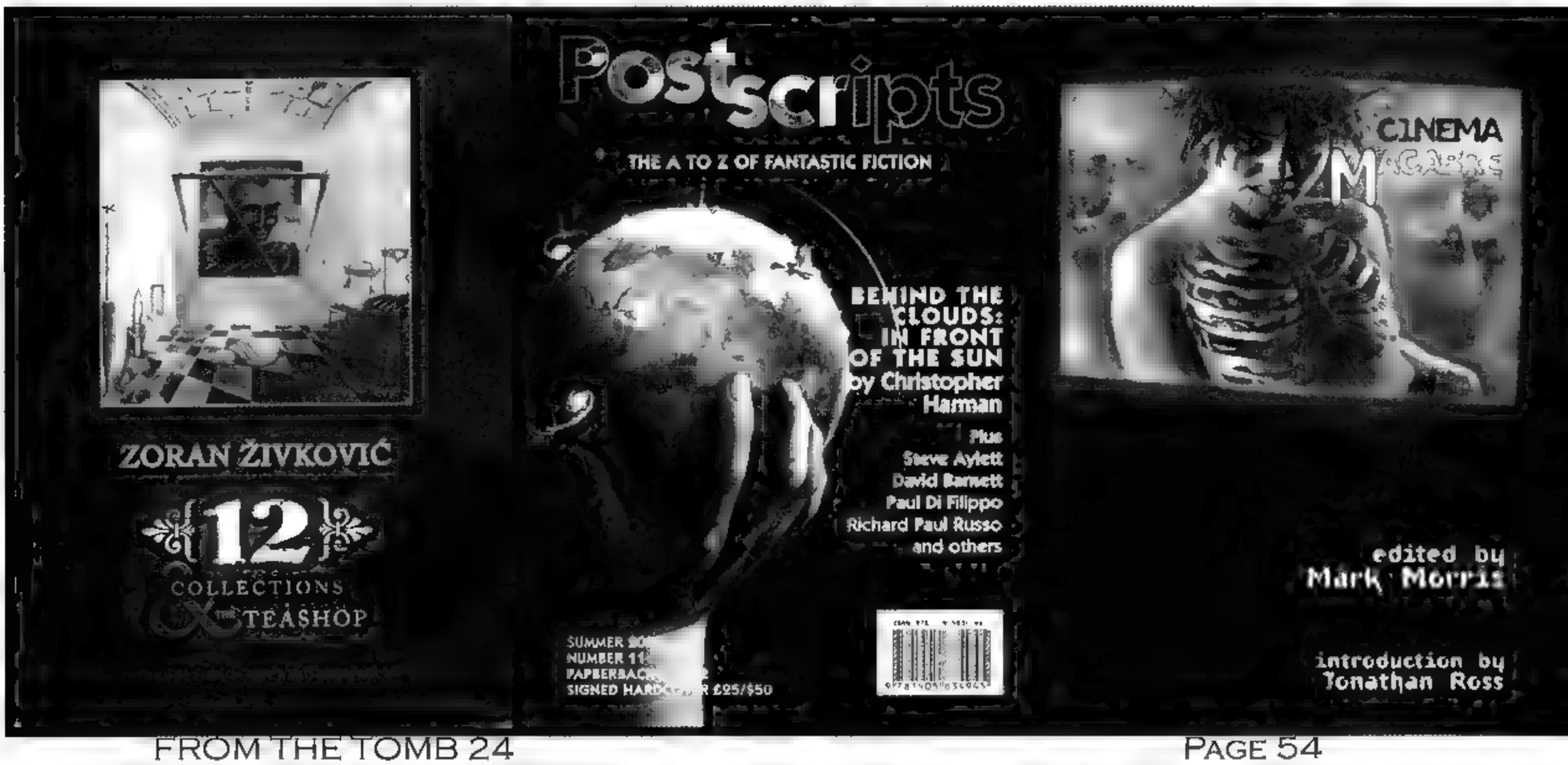
There are many celluloid terrors in these pages that have woven their spell of disquiet for many a year. Yet typically in a collection of this kind there are some glaring omissions, seemingly substituted by entries that defy belief. This however suffuses the intrigue in this assemblage, and a issues a reminder there's still much to be learned. I'd like to think I have seen my fair share of horror movies but there are a numerous inclusions with which I had never been previously acquainted. Even now such introductions are still invaluable. You may find yourself returning to re-appraise certain films that you thought shelved once these fellows have waxed lyrically, eager to dispel their infectious passion. Your interest will be spurred to see how the odious from almost a century of cinematic terror has effected this esteemed collective.

If you have found yourself disturbed by the works of Jean Cocteau, John Carpenter, James Whale, Dario Argento and David Lynch, why not see how Neil Gaiman, Brian Aldiss Stephen Gallagher and Ramsey Campbell have felt about them. You may view them in an entirely different light. **Cinema Macabre** is available as a deluxe slip cased hard cover edition for £75.00/$150 limited to 200 signed by Mark and each of the fifty-two contributors or as a trade hardcover limited to five hundred and signed by Mark for £25/$50. Please add £2/ $4 postage.

12 Collections & The Teashop by Zoran Živkovic. PS Publishing, Grosvenor House, 1 New Road, Hornsea, East Yorkshire, HU18 1PG www.pspublishing.co.uk

Worlds within worlds, stories within stories, dreams within dreams, philosophies within a philosophy. Not since childhood have I encountered such a luscious tapestry of tales. They cleverly weave and intertwine, the most delicate yet essential of threads becoming part of something so much greater. While they make for a beautiful narrative there is a strange depth to each, possibly a reminder of Zoran's distrust of his native Serbia's communist rule and the tragedy faced by this region. As with so many of his fellow countrymen, he will have been careful not to express his deepest feelings, especially when faced with the fear of cruel reprisal.

Further readings will probably begin to uncover the undercurrent meandering through his writing, but for the moment that isn't necessarily important. On the surface they offer a surreal dreamscape, one that will readily embrace you, an agreeable escape from the dilemmas and complexities thwarting our modern world.



However you would be wise to be guarded while adrift in this seeming caress, as in the finest folklore all is never quite as it seems. So many of these short stories are imbued with a timeless quality, having transpired anywhere at anytime in the last couple of hundred years, well excepting those with the cars and the computer This is but one facet of their indelible charm. While little is done to elaborate on the worlds Zoran creates, there is something so vivid about the perspective he shapes. A strange sense of perspective we are indeed bequeathed, but don't expect the answers to the philosophies he creates to be presented on a plate. If that were so you might not choose to make your return to this bounteous treasure. I have read nothing of its match, possibly only a smattering of Jonathon Carroll's perturbing, if not compelling love of European folklore.

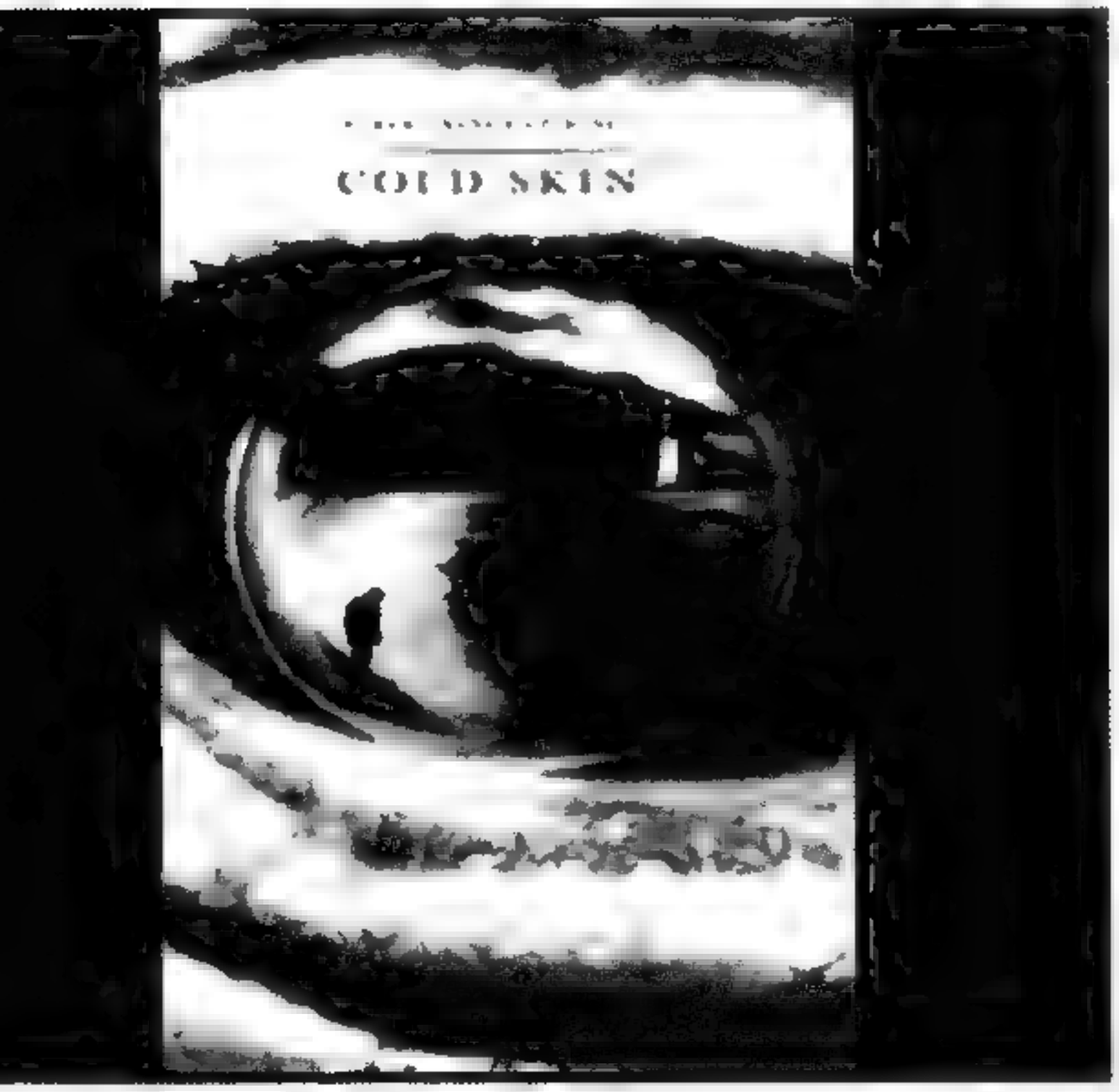
After so many years it may appear an odd thing to say, but my life is richer for having discovered the work of Zoran Živkoviæ, and one can only wonder if the collector of dreams at work early in this collection isn't somehow hidden away in his own shadow. Zoran's **12 Collections & The Teashop** is available as a jacketed hard cover edition for £25/$50 limited to 300 signed by the author and introduction writer Michael Moorcock or as a trade hardcover limited to five hundred and signed by the author for £10/$20. Please add £2/ $4 postage.

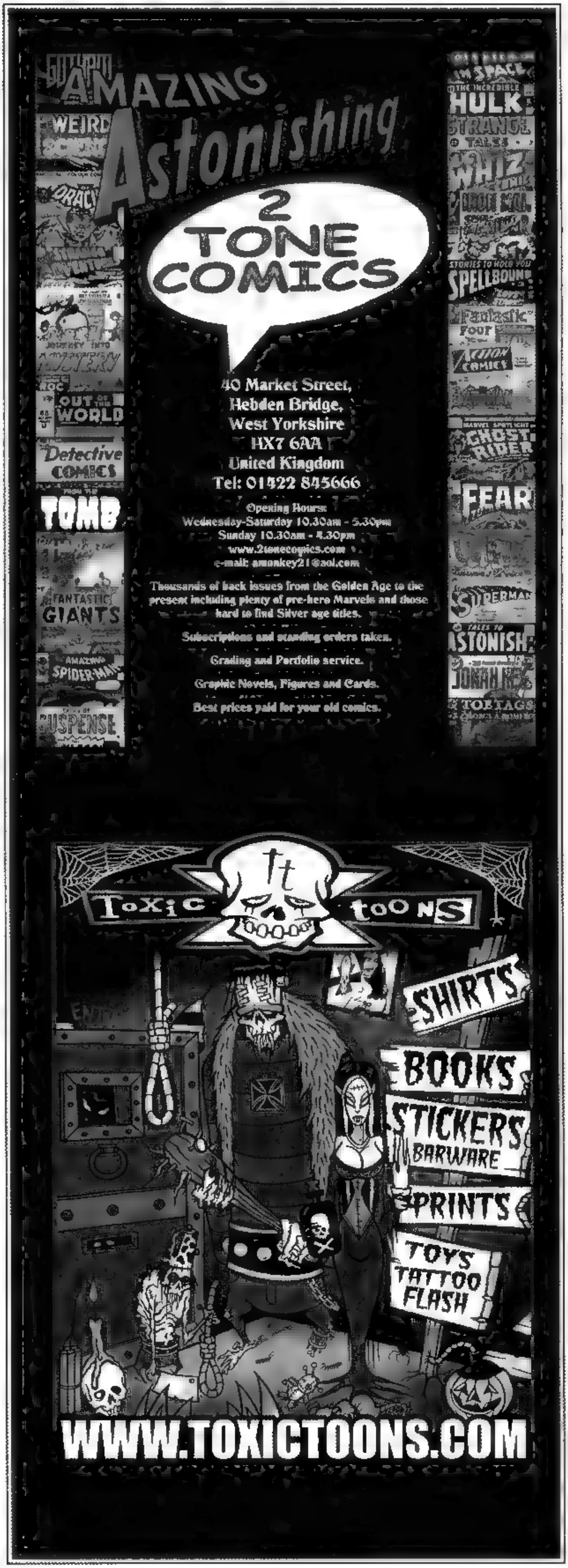
Cold Skin by Albert Sanchez Piñol. 233pp. Translated by Cheryl Leah Morgan. Published by Canongate Books Ltd (2005) at £5.99. ISBN 1 84195 688 0

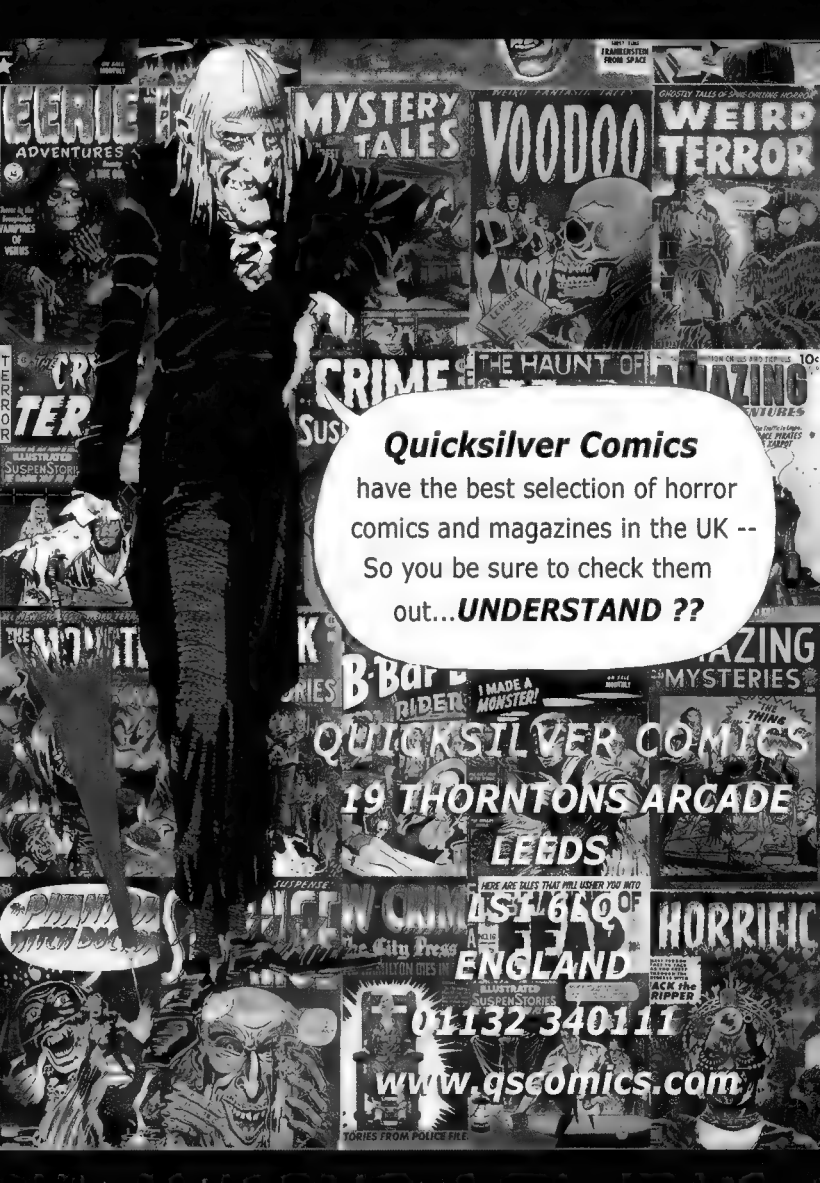
Excellently translated from the Spanish, Cold Skin is narrated by a young man who arrives on a desolate Antarctic island to study the local climate. The year is 1919; the western powers are exhausted while the terror of Communism continues to spread throughout Russia. The narrator, a committed pacifist, is seeking refuge from all of this man-made misery, but he finds even a forlorn locale like this has its troubles. The island's other inhabitant is a German named Gruner, who lives in the lighthouse. This bare setting - two men, one island, no escape - provides a bleak canvas for what lies ahead.

On his first night the narrator settles uneasily into a wooden cabin. It doesn't take long before an army of savage, humanoid sea-creatures - the Sitauca, besiege his flimsy shelter. Somehow he survives and the next day joins Gruner in the relative safety of the lighthouse, where there are guns and ammunition. Even in this remote place Gruner harbours his own sinister secrets In the dark of night, the sea-creatures press home their attacks, their brutality knows no bounds, but there are twists and turns afoot which will seek to question this brutish behaviour and the very nature of human sanity.

In his tale Piñol combines the time-honoured 'man versus monster' with a striking fable rooted in existentialism. Despite the grimness, there are moments when the island assumes the guise of a chilly paradise, enabling the narrator to visualise the Sitauca beyond their simplistic rapacity. The writing is sharp and hard hitting. The plot changes and adapts driven on by the mad conflict. Whenever any kind of equilibrium is gained, the story surges off (sometimes literally) into even deeper and colder waters. The ending is dark, though not entirely without hope. This is a fearsome story, which comes highly recommended. Peter Coady.



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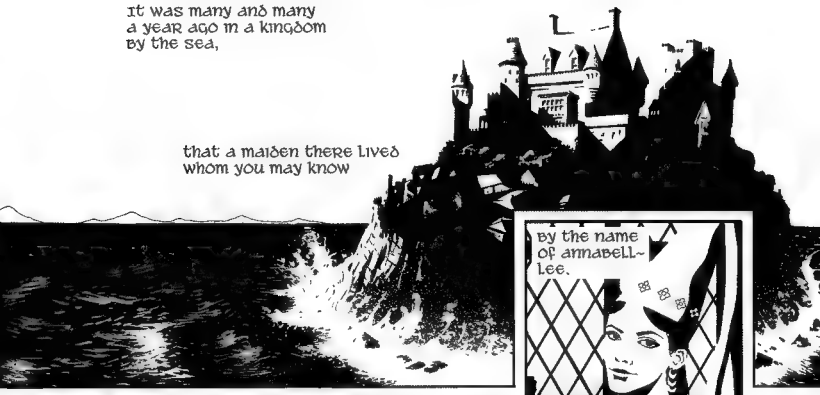
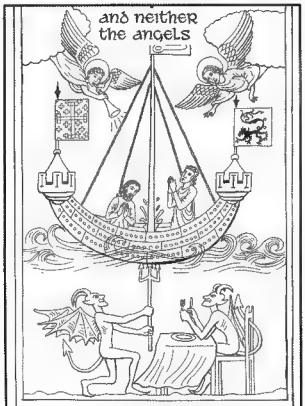


Adapted from the poem written by **Edgar Allan Poe**
Illustrated by **James Fletcher**

I was a child
and she was a child,
in this kingdom by the sea;
but we loved with a love that was more than love I and my annabell lee;
with a love that the winged seraphs of heaven coveted her and me.
and this was the reason that, long ago, in this kingdom by the sea,
a wind blew out of a cloud,
chilling my beautiful annabell lee;
so that her high-borne kinsman came
and bore her away from me, to shut her up
in a sepulchre
in this kingdom by the sea.

the angels, not half so happy in heaven went envying her and me~
yes! that is the reason (as all men know, in this kingdom by the sea)
that the wind came out of the cloud by night,
chilling and killing my annabell lee,

but our love it was stronger by far than the love
of those who were older than we~
of many far wiser than we~


and neither the angels

in heaven above

nor the demons down under the sea,

can ever dissever my soul from the soul
of the beautiful, annabell lee,

for the moon never beams
without bringing me dreams,
of the beautiful annabell lee;
HERE LIES
and the stars never rise,
but I feel the bright eyes
of the beautiful annabell lee;
and so, all the night-tide,
I lay down by the side of my darling~
my life and my bride,
in the sepulchre there by the sea,
in her tomb
by the surrounding sea.
The End

MAILS TO THE TOMB

Peter,

Now read cover to cover - apart from glitches you discussed, it looks wonderful - and I like the cover illo! Perhaps just one font (rather than three) for the three topics above the title logo? (*Eric 'The Goon' Powell* interview font overpowers the other two.) A really handsome package though.

As usual, the design was really eye-catching, and the text has a lively mix of subjects, notably the work by The Greatest Comics Researcher in the World.

Barry Forshaw, London.

Cheers Barry, it's good to hear you enjoyed this issue. The cover blurbs are a step in a new direction, hopefully to attract a little more attention. We will be working on this. As for The Greatest Comics Researcher in the World, well From the Tomb wouldn't be the same without Mr. Motler.

Hello Peter,

I was nicely surprised this morning to find copy of **From The Tomb** waiting for me. The article about my art was just amazing! You have made my day Peter and it is always a thrill to read your magazine. I'm quite busy with some projects at the moment but if you would require an illustration you are always welcome.

Thank you again,
Peter Szmer, London

Peter it was a pleasure to be able to do something with your artwork, you have a rare talent, one which will thankfully grace these pages again in the not too distant future

Hi Peter,

Many thanks for the latest **FTT**. A brilliant piece of work, I am especially impressed with the cover. A lot of newsagents don't like dates on covers, so they can display and sell them over a longer period That cover will sell! Thanks also for printing my work, let me know if you can stand anymore.

All the best,
Chow Martin, Edinburgh.

Thanks for this Chow. Your artwork looked magnificent when I got it onto the page. Any future contributions would be more than welcome. James's cover continues to attract a lot of attention, yet another plus for this issue.

Hey Peter

Just got #22 Just as beautiful as the previous 21, but I really have to comment on "*Through the Eerie Years*" by Gene Broxson. The best thing you've run, in my opinion. Lots of good info here that you can't find a hundred other places. Coincidentally, I was going to drop you a line about a piece I was thinking about on **Horror Tales** (I just won a big batch on eBay and was itching to do something on these goofy things), but this Broxson guy's done a hell of a lot better job than I could ever do. Can't wait for Part 2!

Bestest,
Peter Enfantino, United States

Gene's article has had quite an impact. A lot of people have asked me about a piece on the Eerie Publications in the past, I couldn't believe it when he got in touch and gave me the opportunity to run this.

Hi Peter,

Picked up the latest **Tomb** from Borders and thought I'd drop a few random thoughts to you...

When I read 21, I thought that **Tomb** was getting stuck in a rut in terms of layout and production, but couldn't think of a diplomatic way to put that to you. In 22, you've certainly put that right, with the layouts streets ahead of anything you've done before. My fave was the "*Corpse Bride*", across two pages, a cover detail exploded to large size down one side, gallery of covers along the bottom and crystal clear white text on a black background. Use of side-bars and headers running across the page, really bring a more professional, vibrant feel to the pages. And as for your use of colour for the Eerie publications-mouth-watering! A massive leap forward in Tomb's development. On the down-side, a few sentences seem to go missing across pages, but it's not easy proof-reading that much material.

Gene Broxson the Eerie obsessive should check out Tom Brinkmann's **Bad Mags** web-site, soon to become a book from Headpress/ Critical Vision. It includes lots of photos of Myron Fass character behind these outrageous pulps. I think Gene will find himself in good company!

The Imp- I'm sure the first three issues were available in the UK. I certainly picked them up from somewhere Issue 1 was a Dan Clowes special, bog-standard A5 zine format, issue 2 covered the Jack T Chick fundamentalist tracts and was in the form of a giant tract, issue 3 was on Chris Ware and in A3 tabloid format a la **Acme Novelty**. The only time I ever saw **The Imp 4** was a battered copy at Golden Apple in Melrose, LA, whilst on a visit. I'm sure Raeburn was interviewed in **The Comics Journal** and said he lost a fortune on the fourth issue as no-one was interested in Mexican comics.

All the best.

Justin Marriott

Justin you are so right. I had been looking back at the last few years of From the Tomb and had to be honest I wasn't moving on and taking the design to the next level. Issue 22 marked a big step forward, let's hope I don't rest on my laurels. The missing sentences in Gene's article were another glitch at the printers' end, how I have no idea. I did all I could to make sure this was correct and the print press had ideas of its own.

Hello again, Peter!

Thanks a million for **From The Tomb 22**! Another superb issue! James Fletcher's cover is my favourite yet! I especially like the maggots in the part of her hair! It's nasty attention to detail that gets me every time! I love your "*Corpse Bride*" article a lot! Very good indeed!

Of course, I was very eager to dig into Gene Broxon's EERIE PUB piece! A very nice overview and I look forward to the second part!

Thanks again! You continue to amaze me!! Be well and happy!

Mike Howlett
Roslindale, MA, USA

Hello Peter,

FTT #22 is an excellent issue. You're now the horror version of Alter Ego, reminding people about not only great strips, but more importantly, great creators.

Keep it up!

John Roche Pembrokeshire, Wales.

I like the sound of being the horror version of Alter Ego, I think it might bring a smile to Roy Thomas as well. I've a way to go yet though.

Dear Pete,

Many thanks for the latest issue of **From the Tomb**. Once again another fab issue. I enjoyed the articles on Eric Powell; I do like his artwork. "*The Eerie Years*" and "*Ghost Gallery*" pieces were also of great interest. Pete Von Sholly's comic strip "*The Dirt*" was typically excellent. By the way the review of **Flowers on the Razorwire** never mentioned where I could order a copy.

I look forward to the next issue

Bill Naylor, Kirkby, Merseyside.

Thanks for your kind words Bill. Flowers on the Razorwire can be picked up from www.mediasi.com.

Dear Peter,

Thanks for **FTT #22**. Dare I say it another great issue… but it's true. Honestly I am running out of superlatives. No surprise I suppose bit my favourite piece this time was Gene Broxton's heartfelt Eerie Pubs! What he lacks in solid researchable information (like me for my book **Ghastly Terror!** Gene seems to have fond there is not much information to be had) he more than makes up for in his deranged, slavering obsessive litanies to the Eerie Pubs' psychotic legacy (oops I'm at it now).

I also very much liked Peter Szmer's drawings, not seen any of this awesome artist before. This made quite an impact. All in all brilliant stuff.

Stephen Sennitt, Sheffield.

Praise indeed Stephen. Gene's article seems to have a fair bit of interest and understandably so. Peter Szmer will be seen again next year on the cover to From the Tomb, slowly but surely he is acquiring a very good reputation.

Dear Peter,

I think I'll have to stop going to work so I can actually get some, letters written! I big thanks for **From the Tomb #22**, yet another great issue! Pete, I don't know how you get involved with projects like the **Mammoth Book of Best Horror Comics** and still produce **FTT**! I am beginning to wonder if you may have special superhuman powers!

I very much enjoyed the piece on the Eerie Publications. Those covers are incredible! You did an excellent job with the layouts. The balance of colour and black and white pages seems to be just right now.

There is something I would like to suggest, a full colour advert for your back issues. I think it would look rather impressive and might lead to you selling out of a few of them. Hey I know you are a David Lynch fan but I didn't think a great deal of **Inland Empire** although I loved **Mulholland Drive**, even though I couldn't understand what happened at the end.

All the best,

Stefan Kwiatkowski.

Stefan that work thing will never catch on. You are not going to believe this put the two page spread fro From the Tomb back issues in this issue was created a mater of weeks before your letter arrived, honest. Great minds think alike, or you must be getting a little worried starting to think like me! As for the end of Mulholland Drive, try and think of that little blue box as being akin to Pandora's Box, just as the dark haired girl is beginning to get her memory back, the two kind of become confused and create their own sense of reality. Well sort of. My wife sacked David Lynch after this, saying he had ruined a perfectly good thriller, even though she thinks he is a very pleasant fellow. Somehow I don't think I will get Inland Empire past her.

Hi Pete,

Many thanks once again for supplying another excellent edition of your magazine. It seems that you have become comfortable with the format and presentation. Such constancy makes it feel familiar to the reader and makes it more accessible. A thought did occur to me though; is it possible that you could use a full page to show a black and white picture and then superimpose the words on top. I realise that legibility will be an issue, but this could be overcome within the coloured pages by using a coloured font. Anyway just a thought.

The pages upon which you display 9 covers are an excellent use of space. This permits the reader to see the covers in adequate detail, savouring their finer qualities without losing the feel, which can happen when the images are superimposed; e g. One cover partially overlays another. All in all, large images are good, permitting the reader to savour the atmospheric intensity of the art of that era.

Keep up the excellent work.

Nick Kealy, Norfolk.

Thanks for this Nick. I will give that idea of superimposing the text over a black and white image, it sounds like a challenge. The nine cover galleries seem to be working well, it allows some of those classic old covers to be seen all over again.

Dear Peter,

From the Tomb #22 is another outstanding issue, starting with James Fletcher's excellent cover adornment. There is a lengthy "**Mails to the Tomb**" column this time around, something that I always enjoy seeing. And as usual there are fine contributions from **FTT** stalwarts like Frank Motler, Barry Forshaw, Richard Byard and of course, yourself. I was especially intrigued by Gene M. Broxson's "Through the Eerie Years" an excellent historical survey of one of the most overlooked and enigmatic horror comic companies, Eerie Publications. The author sums it up well when he proclaims "*Eerie Publications really are something of a horror mystery.*"

My initial encounter with Eerie Publications was around 1970 or 1971 when I picked up (I don't remember where) a used copy of **Tales from the Crypt #10**, no doubt startled and impressed by the lurid cover image depicting a buxom female vampire (or ghoul) and a bizarre winged creature (with four eyes and a goatee!) both descending with bloodlust onto their hapless prey in full colour. Inside this July 1968 issue were seven gruesomely effective black & white tales, including such gems as "*A Skeleton in the Closet*", "*Horror Harbor*" and the un-

forgettable "*Experiment in Error.*" There is an anonymous horror host who, as Gene notes, only joins the festivities for the first story ("*A Skeleton in the Closet*"), then disappears for the rest of the issue. I eventually learned that these stories were reprints from vintage Ajax/Farrell horror comics, although to this day I am uncertain of which issues they originated in, or if there were any of the artistic adjustments that Eerie was known for. And until Mr Broxson's informative **FTT** piece I had no idea that **Tales from the Crypt #10** is the rarest of the entire Eerie run (unfortunately my own copy is quite worn from repeated readings followed by decades of storage.) This one-shot Eerie publication was also my introduction to the **Tales from the Crypt** title, although it would be several more years before I would read the "real" Crypt books, namely the EC **Tales from the Crypt**. I have always suspected that Eerie's **TFTC** lasted just one issue because its title ran afoul of copyright laws, perhaps initiated by (then) **Mad** magazine honcho Bill Gaines and company, but this is purely speculation on my part. Anyway, the issue is certainly a memorable relic of my youth wrapped up in 50 horrific pages with a 35 cent cover price.

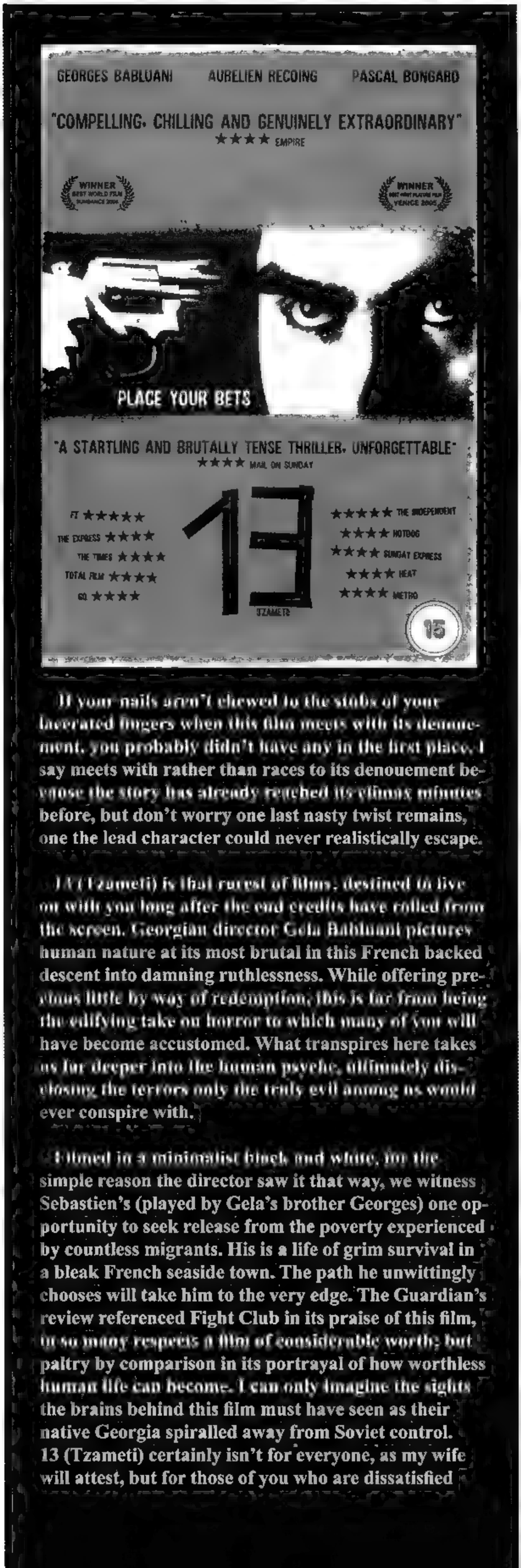
As the 1970s wore on I bought very few issues of the Eerie mags until 1979 when I began buying **Weird Vampire Tales** and **Terrors of Dracula**. By then the cover price was $1.75, soon to be $1.95, and there was no mention of Eerie Publications anymore, the publisher was listed as Modern Day Periodicals. Some of the convenience stores in my area carried both titles on their magazine shelves, usually near the bottom alongside (appropriately) Warren's **Creepy**, **Eerie** or **Vampirella**, or maybe (incongruously) next to **Mad** or **Cracked**. Some of these stores did not even carry regular comic books or have a spinner rack, but were a good source for horror comic mags in a small town. I seem to recall getting an odd glance from a store clerk a time or two while buying **Weird Vampire Tales** or **Terrors of Dracula**, and I suppose the covers were pretty extreme. By the way, one issue of **Weird Vampire Tales** has the distinction of appearing in the cult werewolf film **The Howling** (1981). Early in the film two reporters sneak into the room of Eddie Quist (Robert Picardo) and find the wall covered with macabre art and newspaper clippings, including the cover of the July 1980 issue of **Weird Vampire Tales**. The actual magazine title cannot be seen, but the cover art is clearly visible in a brief close-up.

Weird Vampire Tales and **Terrors of Dracula** came at the very end (1979-1981) of the Eerie (or Modern Day) reign, and I look forward to seeing Gene's comments regarding them, as well as the ultimate demise of the company, in part two of "*Through the Eerie Years*!"

Timothy M. Walters
OK, United States

I am glad you enjoyed this issue Timothy, Gene seems to have taken over From the Tomb, and I for one am not complaining.

Across the page, you thought you'd finally escaped the man, but Pete Von Sholly had other ideas! This Tony Blair send up comes from Pete's forthcoming Capitol Hellcolection to be published by Kitchen Sink, a certain must for all horror fans everywhere!



If your nails aren't chewed to the stubs of your lacerated fingers when this film meets with its denouement, you probably didn't have any in the first place. I say meets with rather than races to its denouement because the story has already reached its climax minutes before, but don't worry one last nasty twist remains, one the lead character could never realistically escape.

13 (Tzameti) is that rarest of films; destined to live on with you long after the end credits have rolled from the screen. Georgian director Gela Babluani pictures human nature at its most brutal in this French backed descent into damning ruthlessness. While offering precious little by way of redemption, this is far from being the edifying take on horror to which many of you will have become accustomed. What transpires here takes us far deeper into the human psyche, ultimately disclosing the terrors only the truly evil among us would ever conspire with.

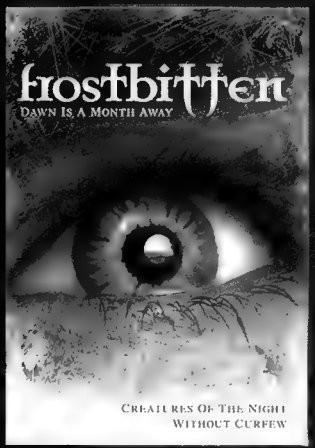
Filmed in a minimalist black and white, for the simple reason the director saw it that way, we witness Sebastien's (played by Gela's brother Georges) one opportunity to seek release from the poverty experienced by countless migrants. His is a life of grim survival in a bleak French seaside town. The path he unwittingly chooses will take him to the very edge. The Guardian's review referenced Fight Club in its praise of this film, in so many respects a film of considerable worth; but paltry by comparison in its portrayal of how worthless human life can become. I can only imagine the sights the brains behind this film must have seen as their native Georgia spiralled away from Soviet control. 13 (Tzameti) certainly isn't for everyone, as my wife will attest, but for those of you who are dissatisfied

THE DEMON DOMAIN
THE ART OF FLINT HASBUDAK

Just over two years ago I had the enjoyable experience of touring the art galleries of central Paris with my wife. With a city so laden with treasures there was much to take in; it was a profoundly inspiring few days. When we chanced upon some paintings by an artist whose name I can no longer recall our innocent excursion with the cultural aspects of the city took a quite different turn. The realm of darkest terror had crept almost unnoticed into these corridors of fine art. My mind turned over and over, for some time I had wanted to do something to expose the Medusa myth, after seeing these images the ideas began to take shape. What I wanted was something very different for these pages, but who amongst the talented array of supporters of this magazine could embellish this haunting apparition? Call it fate, coincidence, synchronicity, whatever, but a matter of weeks later I received an email from Flint seeking out a possible contribution to these ghastly pages. I checked out his website **www.hasbudak.com** and was astounded by what I uncovered. If anyone could breathe life into the serpent-possessed chimera whose coils now slithered through my fetid dreams, surely I had found my man.

Over a couple of emails I discussed with Flint what I had in mind. As can by seen with the eventual cover to **From the Tomb 21** he fully understood that with which my delirious imaginings had wrestled and in truth transcended my own vision. It was indeed sublime, poignantly manifest in its evocation of this much-maligned soul. Flint has continued with his love of comic book and fantasy art, a step into the annals of comic book fame seeming only moments away. Readers of various small press magazines such as **Something Wicked** and **Strip Magazine** will already be familiar with his flowing brushstrokes. Having studied interior design prior to making his move into comics he has more at his disposal than the average illustrator. Storyboarding television commercials and animation films has already put him good stead for his chosen career.

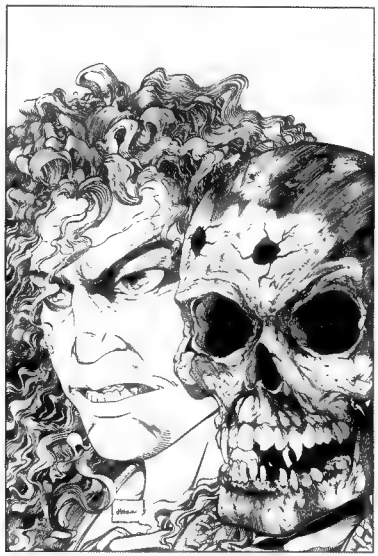
As you will see in this spread and over the page there are those characters in his craft that appear immersed in the finest detail, yet a graceful swiftness is inherent to their composition. The demons however will peer deep beyond your eyes and verily torture your soul; here we have that rare talent an artist able to combine dark horror with heroic fantasy. In the years that come much will be heard of Flint and hopefully time permitting his self-created series **Totuk** shown below.



Frostbitten, Sweden's first venture into the vampire genre from a couple of years back, deserves the ninety-six minutes of your time it takes to unfold this story. Using the inescapable premise employed by Steve Niles, it dwells in the land of the midnight sun, at that time of year when the caress of the sun's warmth has been swallowed for an entire month. You get the idea, there's no way out!

The opening war time sequence probably aroused my interests more than any other part of this film largely owing to the definable chill pervading these scenes which, if they had been allowed to develop would have have made for an unsettling assault. Instead they had to let the pill taking teenagers loose. If you've been reading these pages long enough you will already know teenage horror doesn't quite work for me, I've become a grumpy old git. Thankfully under Anders Banke's direction there was more than enough to keep me gripped and some of the humour worked to great effect. The vampire transformations are also expertly conceived. The build up prior to the inevitable blood bath, which looked to be a take on Peter Jackson's wonderful "Braindead", does contain its fair share of suspense. It doesn't take too long before you realize things aren't as they should be, but then that's why you're here rather than vegetating to Coronation Street and its ilk.

It's by no means a classic, it certainly won't live on to haunt your nightmares, but if you are looking for an entertaining jaunt, that given its extreme northern locale, would make for the perfect winter's evening by the fire, then this is it. The episodes in the hospital will hold your attention and there are enough ideas here to make for a more chilling sequel. It's a film with bags of potential. let's hope we see Anders take it all the way next time.



TONY DIPRETA'S

DREADFUL GEMS

By Peter Coady

Tony DiPreta, born 9 July 1921, remains one my favourite horror comic artists. His drawings have a fast-paced, claustrophobic quality that raises the tension from the outset of each story. So many of the tales he illustrated concern people who are not entirely what they appear, or who are possessed with more than one personality; always a creepy notion.

DiPreta's stories are usually set in those modern times of over fifty years past, albeit very hard times. Many of them take place in seedy, run-down districts where the characters are scratching for every penny. Perhaps when he drew these stories during the fifties, he was remembering his American childhood in the Depression, during which his father was unemployed and the family lived on the breadline.

From an early age he was a great a comic book fan, and from junior high school wanted to be an illustrator. It was a career he began after leaving school, inking and colouring comic books for Quality Comics while working with an advertising agency. Quality editor Ed Cronin and his assistant Gill Fox recognised his potential and sent him to develop his technique at Lou Fine's studio. With careful guidance he eventually progressed to full-blown artist, and after attracting interest at Timely was inspired to go freelance. A heart murmur released him from serving in World War 2, and so, having honed his skills on the home front, later assisting on the syndicated newspaper strip Mickey Finn, he was perfectly placed to enter the 1950s comic book boom.

His contribution to the horror field was mainly for Atlas Comics. His brush strokes appeared in those infamous issues of *Adventures into Terror*, *Adventures Into Weird Worlds*, *Astonishing*, *Marvel Tales*, *Menace*, *Mystery Tales*, *Strange Tales and Uncanny Tales* and after the Code in a slightly more restrained form in *Strange Tales of the Unusual, and Worlds of Fantasy*. His work can also be seen in the crime fiction titles of the period such as *Tales of Justice*, war comics like *Battlefront* and from 1959 on the Joe Palooka strip.

IT WAS A CONTEST FOR POWER BETWEEN MARK SLADE AND THE MEDICINE MAN, MUA LANI AND BECAUSE THE FOX-HAIRED TATTOOED WAS NEVER SEEN SUCH MAGIC AS THIS WHITE MAN MADE, THEY ACCEPTED HIM AS THEIR LEADER UNTIL HIS RIVAL MADE
THE TABOO
A WILD-LOOKING BUNCH THESE NATIVES ARE! I'VE BEEN TRADING WITH THEM FOR YEARS, BUT I'M LIVIN' FOR SAILIN' ME 30 FLEE FROM AMERICA AND MAKE FOR THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS!
LEO+
T.D.PRETA
THE DRENCHED MAN WAS GIVEN A THATCHED HUT FOR SHELTER AND TEN NATIVES BROUGHT FISH FOOD IN A WEEK IN THEIR OWN SIMPLE LANGUAGE BUT NO WORD OR ATTENTION OF GRATITUDE TO SOMETHING GREAT AS A GOD.
MARK SLADE FOUND THAT THE SOUTH SEA ISLANDERS HAD COME TO HELP HIM, AND HE WAS MUCH RELIEVED.
I'M CRUSHED TO BITS FOR SAYIN' HE BUT I WONDER IF HE'S A TOUCH LIKE ME...
NEVER MIND ! I WISH I'D MANY PEARLS OR GOOD BUY ONES
WE HAVE BOAT FREE! WHERE FRIEND? THE CHIEF IS CALM AND THE WARD WITCH-DOCTOR IS QUIET! WE WILL BE SORRY TO SEE YOU LEAVE!
T.D.PRETA

THE OTHER MAN
GEORGE BARTOK'S USED-BOOK SHOP IS ON KHARKOV STREET IN A SMALL TOWN IN A TINY EUROPEAN COUNTRY. THAT'S WHERE HE SPENDS HIS DAYS AND NIGHTS... LOOKING FOR VALUABLE BOOKS.
BUT SUDDENLY A SHARP GLEAM OF EXCITEMENT FILLS BARTOK'S EYES AS A NAME OF ONE OF THE BINDINGS STRIKES HIS MEMORY
BAH! JUNK, ALL OF IT! THERE'S NOT A SAVAGEMENT IN THE WHOLE LOT. THAT'S WORTH A CENT!
19!
IT LOOKS ANCIENT. I CAN HARDLY MAKE OUT THE LETTERING... "JEKYLL AND HYDE"... GREAT SCOTT!
THE NOTES OF DR. JEKYLL... AND MR. HYDE! THE MOST POWERFUL SECRET IN THE WORLD.
HE WANTED TO KNOW ALL THE SECRETS OF THE UNKNOWN, BUT WHAT HE DIDN'T REALIZE WAS THAT THE UNKNOWN INCLUDED DEATH!
T.D.PRETA
ALL NAMES AND PLACES IN THESE STORIES ARE FICTITIOUS
ANY SIMILARITY BETWEEN ACTUAL PERSONS OR PLACES AND THOSE USED IN THESE STORIES IS PURELY COINCIDENTAL

Above the splash page to the post-Code tale "The Taboo". As with so many comic book artists the Code wasn't to inspire Tony to engage some of the more bizarre strokes so intrinsic to his style. While the "Other Man" seen two years before this sanitising legislation reveals a familiar unsettling approach, completely suited to these macabre years.

Sadly I was born at the wrong time and place to enjoy DiPreta's eerie etchings in their original splendour, but as a kid I caught up with a few of them in the 1960s British reprints brought out by Len Miller. Only a small handful of DiPreta's horror output is scattered through these comics, but they are all classically scary yarns that still pack a chill after many re-readings. Mystic no. 6, for example, features *The Taboo.* In this we meet South Seas rogue Mark Slade, whose sailing boat runs aground on a remote island, a far cry from urban New York. While Slade repairs his damaged boat, he keeps the natives busy diving for precious pearls, which he intends to take back with him to civilization. The local witch-doctor is jealous, however, and when he conjures up a mysterious storm, Slade grabs his sack of pearls and swims out to his boat. He makes good headway until he discovers that he is by no means the only shark in the neighbourhood...

In *Mystic* no. 18, we find the story *"The Other Man"*. In this little shocker, mid-European bookshop owner, George Bartok, finds the formula that enabled Dr. Jekyll to become the wicked Mr. Hyde. Bartok uses the recipe to cook up a noxious serum that instantly changes his appearance into that of a hateful monster. Seized by greed and a lust for power, he goes on a murderous spree. He then escapes back to his shop and drinks more of the formula, changing back into a harmless citizen. Confident that he will not be recognized, he opens the door to pursuing police officers. Without hesitation, they open fire, killing Bartok. Only then is it plain that the book-dealer and his evil alter-ego are much closer than we thought...

Mystic fans would have to wait until issue 45 to see another of DiPreta's most original tales, *"The Little Monsters"*. The splash page featured in the introduction to this piece, is imbued with a macabre surrealism few of his contemporaries would have dared to conceive. In this creepy-crawly epic, we meet gambling addict Harry Kendall, the terrified guy about to meet his fate in the splash, as he arrives at his Uncle Andrew's South American plantation. Harry is hoping to get a loan to pay off his debts, but Uncle sensibly says no. The old man then reveals that a huge army of soldier ants is in the area, consuming everything in its path. The only way to save the plantation when the ants arrive will be to open the floodgates on the river and fill the irrigation trenches with water.

THE MAN WHO ISN'T THERE
YOU MIGHT CALL IT A GHOST, A SPIRIT OR, EVEN A "THING" BEYOND THE GRAVE... BUT IN EACH CASE YOU'D BE WRONG! THIS IS SOMETHING DIFFERENT, STRANGE, TERRIFYING! THIS IS...
THE MAN WHO ISN'T THERE!
A TALE TO MARVEL AT!

THE HOUR IS LATE, AND IN THE WAITING ROOM OF THE RAILROAD STATION, AN OLD MAN SNORES SOUNDLY AS A STEALTHY SHADOW COMES HIS WAY...
A HAND STRETCHES OUT AND CLUTCHES THE OLD MAN'S BLACK BAG...
HE'S OUT LIKE A LOG! THE OLD DOPE... HE DESERVES GETTING HIS BAG PINCHED! THAT'LL TEACH HIM TO SLEEP ON HOURS!

IT WAS THE BEST COMPANY JERRY EVER WORKED FOR... BUT THERE WAS ONE STRANGE FACT THAT PUZZLED THE LAD... JUST WHAT WAS THE BOSS SELLING?
JERRY'S NEW JOB
YOU MEAN I GET THE JOB? JUST LIKE THAT? YOU, SIR!
WHAT'S THE JOB ALL ABOUT?
IT'S THE BIG NEW OPPORTUNITY ADVERTISED FOR A FILE CLERK AT A HUNDRED DOLLARS A WEEK! JOE THOMPSON CAME HOME EVERY DAY
AVERNUS BUILDING
YES...JERRY JOHNSON...YOU GOT THE JOB! BUT JUST WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT AVERNUS COMPANY? WHAT DO THEY EXPORT? YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN CURIOUS ABOUT THINGS, JERRY... BUT ON THIS JOB, TAKE WARNING...YOU'D BETTER NOT BE TOO INQUISITIVE!
YES, MY BOY, THE JOB IS YOURS! I'M SURE YOU'LL BE HAPPY WITH US! THERE'S NOTHING TOO GOOD FOR AVERNUS EMPLOYEES! FOR INSTANCE, MOST COMPANIES THROW A BIG OFFICE PARTY EVERY YEAR... BUT WE HAVE ONE EVERY WEEK!
WE'LL BE A HAPPY FAMILY, BOSS! JUST A JOLLY LITTLE OUT!
GOT A HOT PROSPECT, BOSS! ONLY WITCH DR. WHITE A TEN-YEAR CONTRACT!
THE ANSWER IS AYE! HE SIGNED FOR MORE THAN SEVEN YEARS! SURE DOES HE WANT FOR A MILLION DOLLARS?
GEE! A MILLION DOLLARS!
AVERNUS EXPORTING AND IMPORTING

The following morning, after a hearty breakfast, Harry murders his Uncle and dumps the old man's body in the river. He now stands to inherit a large fortune to support his gambling career. Before he has time to celebrate, however, the dread insect army arrives at the plantation. With ants invading his pants, Harry runs to the river to open the floodgates, only to find them jammed tight. He looks despairingly down into the river and sees there, caught in the floodgate wheels, a very familiar object. Meanwhile those hungry ants keep coming, millions and millions of them, and there's only so much of Harry to go round…

The next DiPreta delight pops up in *Spellbound* 46, *"The Man Who Isn't There"*. Our hero in this mini-chiller is Marty Mallen, yet another ruthless low-life. He thinks he's made it big when he steals a cloak that renders him invisible. Slipping unseen past every door, he plunders the finest houses and the most expertly hidden treasures. All that lovely loot is stashed in the grubby little boarding house where he lives. When the police show up there, he uses his nifty cloak to hide. Too bad he doesn't realize the cops have arrived for a very different, and quite deadly, reason…

Spellbound. 46 also contains my favourite DiPreta tale, *"Jerry's New Job"*. This tale is very much contemporary and harks back to the strife of his early years. The new job secured by Jerry is with a sales company; a quite modest post, yet very well paid. What's more, the Chairman, Mr Eblis, is a jolly character who throws a fantastic office party every week. Jerry is happy enough but eventually he starts wondering exactly what commodity the company is trading in. Snooping around one night, he runs into Mr Eblis, who explains a few home truths. Too late, Jerry realises that, in this case, there really is the Devil to pay...

There was to be a further wait before his next appearance in Spellbound 59, although this proves another bonus for DiPreta fans in that it contains a blood-chilling brace of his most unsettling efforts; *"The Dragon"* and *Find the Pin and Pick it Up"*. In the first tale we meet Bill Lang, a tourist from the USA on a visit to China. He's pleased when he meets a pretty fellow-American called Lola who agrees to accompany him sight seeing.

"The Man Who Isn't There" first saw the light of day in Atlas's Marvel Tales #113 (April 1953) with "Jerry's New Job" appearing a few months later in #117 (August 1953) of this same title. Each of these stories allude to Tony's relish of these terrifying years.

FIND THE PIN and PICK IT UP
TERRIFYING MYSTERY FROM A WEIRD WORLD!
AND NOW, MR. BOGGS, FOR MY FINAL STROKE OF VENGEANCE... THE COUP DE GRACE!
HAITIAN VOODOO
BLACK MAGIC
DiPetta
OLD AND LONELY PROFESSOR SMOGGS, WITHOUT A FRIEND IN THE WORLD, FINDS HIS ONLY PLEASURE LAY IN THE STUDY OF HIS BOOKS ON HAITIAN FOLKLORE...
BUT THERE ARE TIMES WHEN EVEN HIS BOOKS GIVE NO SOLACE TO HIS LONELY HEART...
AT THIS MOMENT OF DEPRESSION, A WHINING AND SCRATCHING SOUND IS HEARD AT HIS DOOR...
SCRATCH
SCRATCH
WHINE

STEP RIGHT UP, FOLKS! STEP RIGHT UP AND MEET...
THE DRAGON
A TALE TO MARVEL AT!
THERE'S NOTHING TO FEAR, REALLY...NOT UNLESS YOU BELIEVE THE IMPOSSIBLE...
CHINA: EXOTIC LAND OF STRANGE PEOPLE AND STRANGER CUSTOMS! THIS IS YOUR FIRST VOYAGE TO THE ORIENT, LOLA? I HOPE YOU'RE NOT TOO NERVOUS FOR THIS SIGHTSEEING TRIP!
I GUESS I'M A LITTLE NERVOUS, BUT I'M SURE IT'LL BE WONDERFUL! I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO SEE THE FAMOUS SIGHTS OF CHINA!
HONG KONG IS A PECULIAR COMBINATION OF THE ANCIENT AND THE MODERN! BUT THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO SEE IT ALL--A BUS TOUR...
STEP RIGHT UP, GIRL! SEE ALL THE WONDERFUL, MYSTERIOUS SIGHTS OF CHINA! VISIT THE DENS AND THE OPIUM DISTRICT! SEE THE SIGHTS FROM HONG KONG UNTIL YOU SEE THE MYSTERIOUS, FAR-CHASTAYE STREETS...SPECIAL RATES FOR AMERICANS! THIS IS AN AMERICAN TOUR CONDUCTED!
WHAT BETTER WAY IS THERE TO BEGIN YOUR TOUR THAN WITH A VISIT TO THE OPIUM DENS? I'M FILLED WITH AMERICAN TOURISTS...
ALL ABOARD! LADY AND GENTLEMEN! AMERICA'S FINE TOUR OF HONG KONG IS ABOUT TO BEGIN!

"Find The Pin and Pick It Up" came from Atlas's boom period of late 1952 and early 1953 horror with "The Dragon" being the finale for the October 1952 Marvel Tales #109. Each being unabashed in encapsulating this fear filled phenomenon.

Their tour-bus takes them to a den in the old opium quarter, where the legendary Dragon-Worshippers used to gather. Deep inside the maze of gloomy passages, Lola starts to get frightened. She throws her arms around Bill. He laughs and says there's nothing to worry about, but then her grip starts to tighten…

In "*Find the Pin and Pick it Up*" we say hello to Professor Smoggs, who lives a solitary existence in his book-laden mansion. One cold, rainy night the lonely Professor hears a pathetic scratching at the door and finds a half-starved, stray dog waiting there. He brings the peckish pooch inside, gives him a feed and decides to adopt him. He names the dog Haiti, and the two become devoted friends. Then one day they stray onto the property of Smogg's neighbour, a grumpy character named Briggs. Briggs shoots and wounds poor Haiti, and Professor vows to get revenge.

Using his arcane knowledge, the Professor makes a voodoo effigy of Briggs and uses it daily to torment his trigger-happy neighbour. Briggs knows he's doomed, and so his faithful Indian manservant, Kali, explains the mystical art of reincarnation. One stormy midnight, Smoggs, in company with his now-recovered hound, pierces the heart of the devil-doll and Briggs duly breathes his last. Kali's ministrations have not been in vain, however, because Briggs is immediately reincarnated in a most unexpected form. Only then does Professor Smoggs understand that sometimes it really can be a dog's life…

So typical of Atlas's method of comic book production, there is no common theme to these stories, apart from wrong-doers getting their come-uppance. Only in "*Jerry's New Job*", which is a dig at all-American 'big business', is there any hint of moral ambivalence. Apart from that, these stories clearly reflect the sound, states-side ethics of the 1950s. But are they frightening? I should say so – they certainly scared the braces off me as kid, and even now, forty years later, they can still generate a chilling unease. The sheer darkness of these tales does the trick every time, helped by some truly striking 'splash' fronts. However, the few items I've outlined here

THE VAMPIRE'S CHRISTMAS

I know it's almost spring, but as I write these words it's less than a week before Christmas, and the way things have a habit of going with this magazine some of you might not see this until the festive season comes around this time next year. "The Vampire's Christmas" first appeared in 2003, Image Comics kindly dig it out once every so often and offer it again. It is definitely worth seeking out.

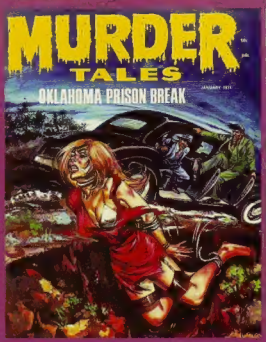
Joseph Michael Linsner the creator of "Dawn" provides the words and pencils while Mike Dubisch embellishes his layouts with a quite beautiful pallet of textured paint work. The result is not only beautiful on the eye, but also entertains with a thoroughly enjoyable story line. There's the welcome Linsner babe or two as his vampire Esque seeks out that which he craves most. There are certain things you can get away with in a city like New York, but these days you could get away with them in sunny Rochdale as well, we've fallen that far few seem to mind.

Esque has been with us ever since "Cry for Dawn" #6, way back in 1991. In those days he had to be a little more careful. This London born vampire simply refuses to die and on this showing should be around for many years to come. He has guile and in a world where the Goth regards this dead species as the perfect ideal, he can survive. And survive he does with an unusual sense of morality, one that will bring a ready smile to your face.

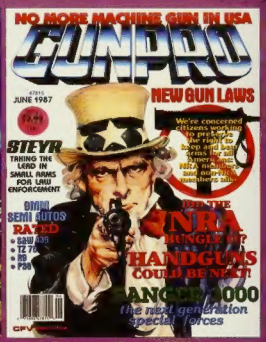
Joseph has carved out quite a reputation, his women are the stuff of your darkest fevered imagining, but he can write and reveals a tacit understanding of everyday life in the big city. This 48 page soft cover seasonal tale might be one to pick up from www.linsner.com or order through your local comic shop. You won't be disappointed! As you look forward to your Easter celebrations I'm off for yet more festive cheer. All the very best to you all.

Bad American Comics Fass Gallery

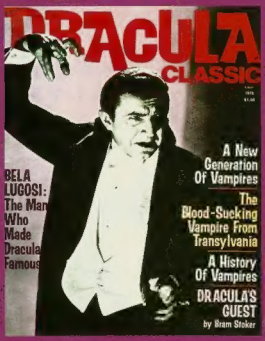
Oogle #2 (July 1957)



Murder Tales Vol 1 #10



Gunpro (June 1987)


DRACULA CLASSIC
A New Generation Of Vampires
The Blood-Sucking Vampire From Transylvania
A History Of Vampires
DRACULA'S GUEST
by Bram Stoker
BELA LUGOSI: The Man Who Made Dracula Famous

Dracula Classic (1976)

Space OdysseyVol 2 #1 (April

A BOOK THAT CAN SAVE FOREVER!
JOHN
WE REMEMBER YOU
THE LIFE AND TIMES OF JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY
AN INTIMATE BIOGRAPHY
YOUNG JOHN KENNEDY
JOHN AND JACKIE'S LOVE STORY
AMERICA'S FIRST FAMILY
WHITE HOUSE CHILDREN
HAPPY TIMES, HAPPY MEMORIES
THE GREATEST COLLECTION OF PERSONAL PHOTOGRAPHS
THE KENNEDY YEARS— A PHOTO HISTORY IN COLOR

John We Remember You (1974)

SEA MONSTERS
MANEATING KILLERS OF THE DEEP
THE TRUTH ABOUT THE LOCH NESS MONSTER
SHIPS THAT HAVE BEEN ATTACKED BY SEA MONSTERS
SEA MONSTERS IN AMERICAN WATERS

Sea Monsters Vol 1 #1 (Winter 1976)

Space Wars Vol 2 #1 (Feb 1978)

Thriller Vol 1 #2 (1962)